Yearly Budgeting for a CRC: An Interactive Discussion

ARHE Staff Chat

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Session Purpose

Participants will:

- Identify core CRP budget categories + hidden costs
- Map funding streams & understand how they affect planning
- Strengthen your budget narrative for leadership advocacy
- Leave with templates/tools + next steps

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Session Norms

How to Participate

- Chat Prompts and polls
- Online engagement activities
- Discussion: Share successes and challenges
- Bring a rough budget outline if you have one

Go to slido.com

 # 2165 831

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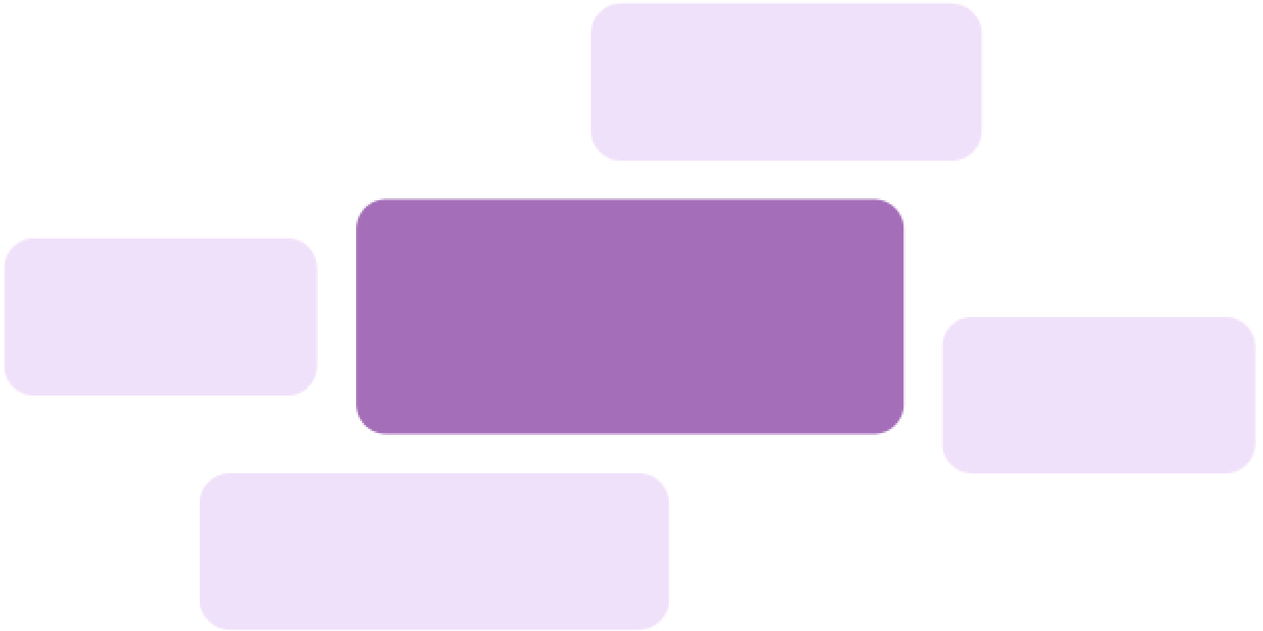
In one word: budgeting feels like ____

Review answers 0

Results will appear below



Quick Poll!

Where are you in a budgeting process?

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Quick Poll!

Which of the following budget-related tasks tend to be the most challenging for you?

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The CRP Budget “Ecosystem”

Types of Cost Items

- Operating Costs (baseline)
  - Fixed costs
  - Variable costs
- Expansion costs (future planning)

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Budget Principles

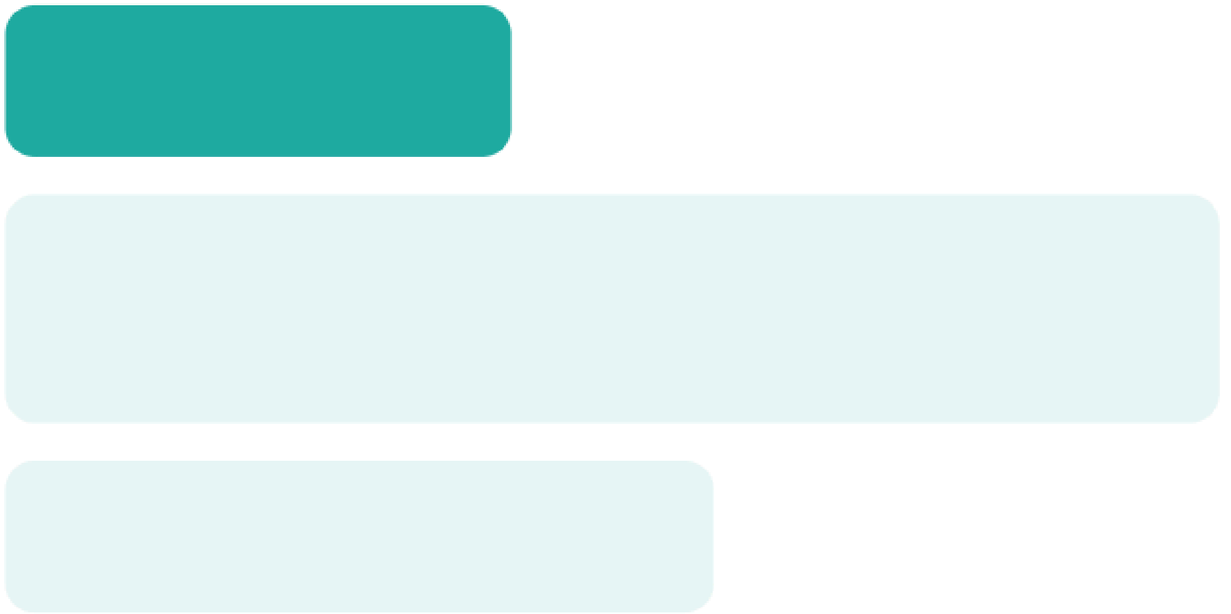
- Budget = planning tool, not just a spreadsheet
- “If you can’t explain it, you can’t defend it.” (narrative matters)
- Funders/leadership fund stories + outcomes + risk reduction

What costs/categories do you currently include in your CRP Budget?

Results will appear below

"What's one non-negotiable line item in your CRP budget?"

Results will appear below



Common Budget Categories

1. Personnel
    a. Salary/wages, student workers/internship stipends, fringe/benefits
    b. Backfill coverage, overtime, supervision time, admin/grant management time
2. Programming
    a. Recovery meetings/events, wellness activities, guest speakers
    b. Food/catering (often a major real cost)
3. Training & PD
    a. Conferences, certification fees, continuing ed, membership dues
4. Travel
    a. Mileage, lodging, per diem, local travel, group travel, retreats,
    b. Additional things to consider: inter-campus travel for student activities (if institution has >1 campus location)

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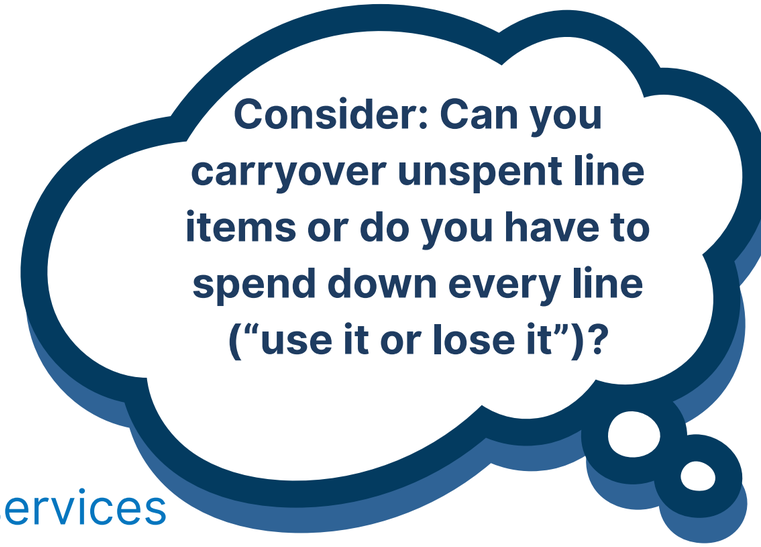
Common Budget Categories

5. Marketing & outreach
    a. Printing, tabling supplies, giveaways, signage, merch, T-shirts
6. Student support
    a. Emergency aid, transportation, dining hall stipends, scholarships, mutual aid microgrants, service awards, participation awards
7. Facilities/space
    a. Ongoing: Rent/chargeback, supplies, cleaning
    b. Initial expenses: paint, renovations, furniture, etc.
8. Evaluation & data
    a. Survey tools, incentives, data system subscriptions
9. Operations/software
    a. Software licenses, tech, office supplies, accessibility, translation services
10. Emergency/contingency
    a. “When something happens” fund



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Smart Strategies for Building Sustainable Budgets

- Anchor core staffing in stable funding whenever possible, and use short-term grants to support growth and innovation.
- Plan for recurring student support needs (including food and emergency aid) as essential components of CRP engagement.
- Strengthen continuity by documenting outcomes and building a clear case for ongoing institutional investment.
- Program evaluation and reporting, with dedicated staff time and resources to support sustainability and future funding.
- Design budgets that support healthy capacity, so programs can thrive without relying on staff overextension

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Funding streams & planning

Common funding streams

- Institutional base budget
- Student fees / student union allocation
- Grants (state/federal/private)
- Philanthropy + donor giving
- Sponsorships
- Fundraising (events/campaigns)
- Partnerships (on- and off-campus)
- External contracts / training revenue (in some models)
- On-campus alcohol sales percentage

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What are some “out of the box” funding streams or partnerships that you can think of to support these line items?

For example:

- Working with local IOP providers, RCOs, etc. to fund conference participation for a student
- Working with 0.0% drink providers to supply beverages for your space
- Partnering with local restaurants / chains for end of day food donations
- Add student positions to institutional Work Study database, hire Americorps workers, etc. so funding is external to your CRP budget
- Partner with departments to share resources
- Establish a student org. as an extension of your CRP to access programming funds

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ARHE Standards and Recommendations

#6. CRPs are non-profit entities

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#6. CRPs are non-profit entities

"A non-profit organization status promotes the ability to keep the mission and structure above the personal interests of individuals and other for-profit motives. Thus, ***students should not be charged for standard supports*** *(e.g., recovery coaching, not-for credit seminars, use of recovery space). Students may be charged for additional supports (e.g., trips, on-campus housing, study abroad, and for-credit course work) at usual university rates. When students are charged for these additional supports and activities, every effort should be made to ensure access for all students regardless of financial status."*

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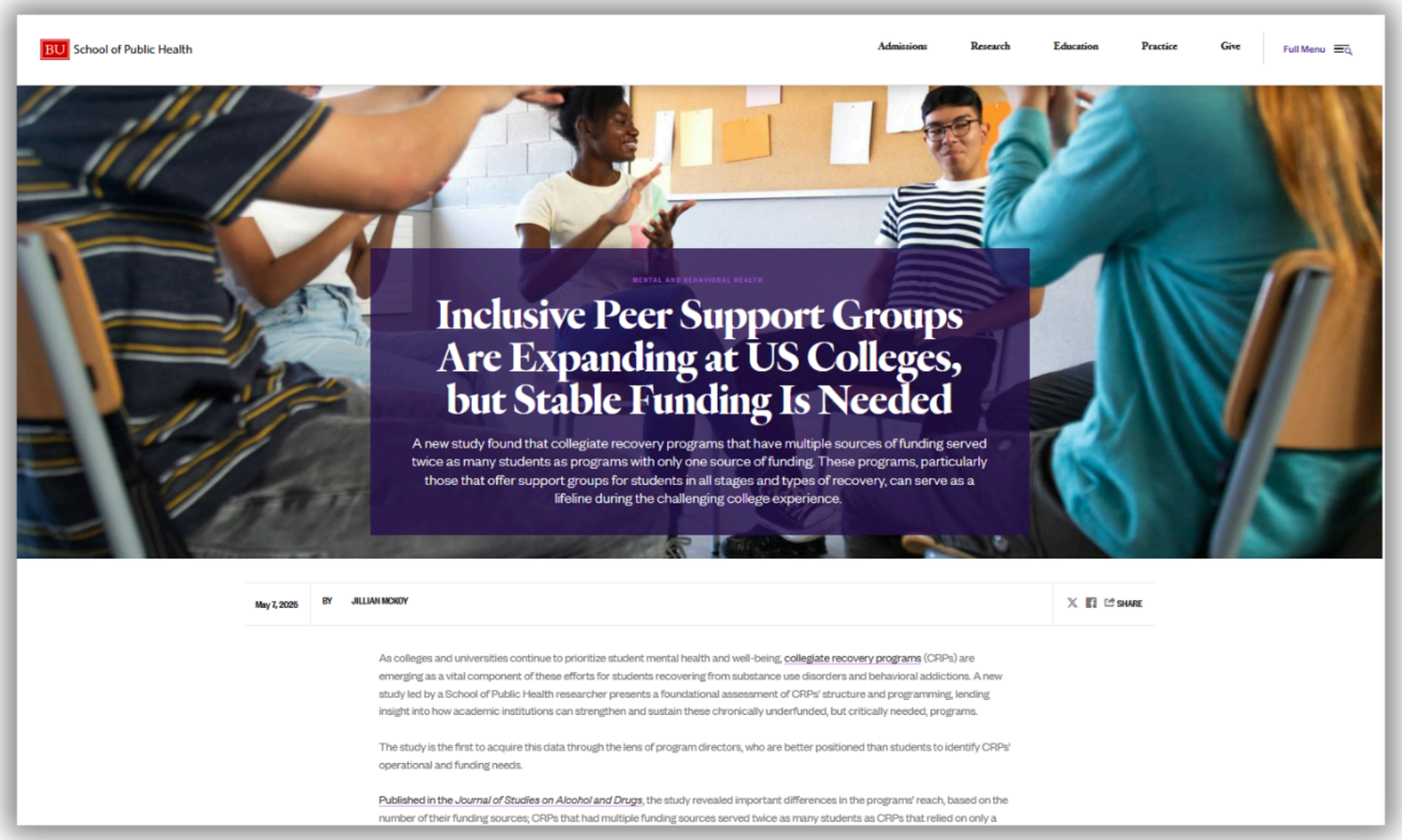
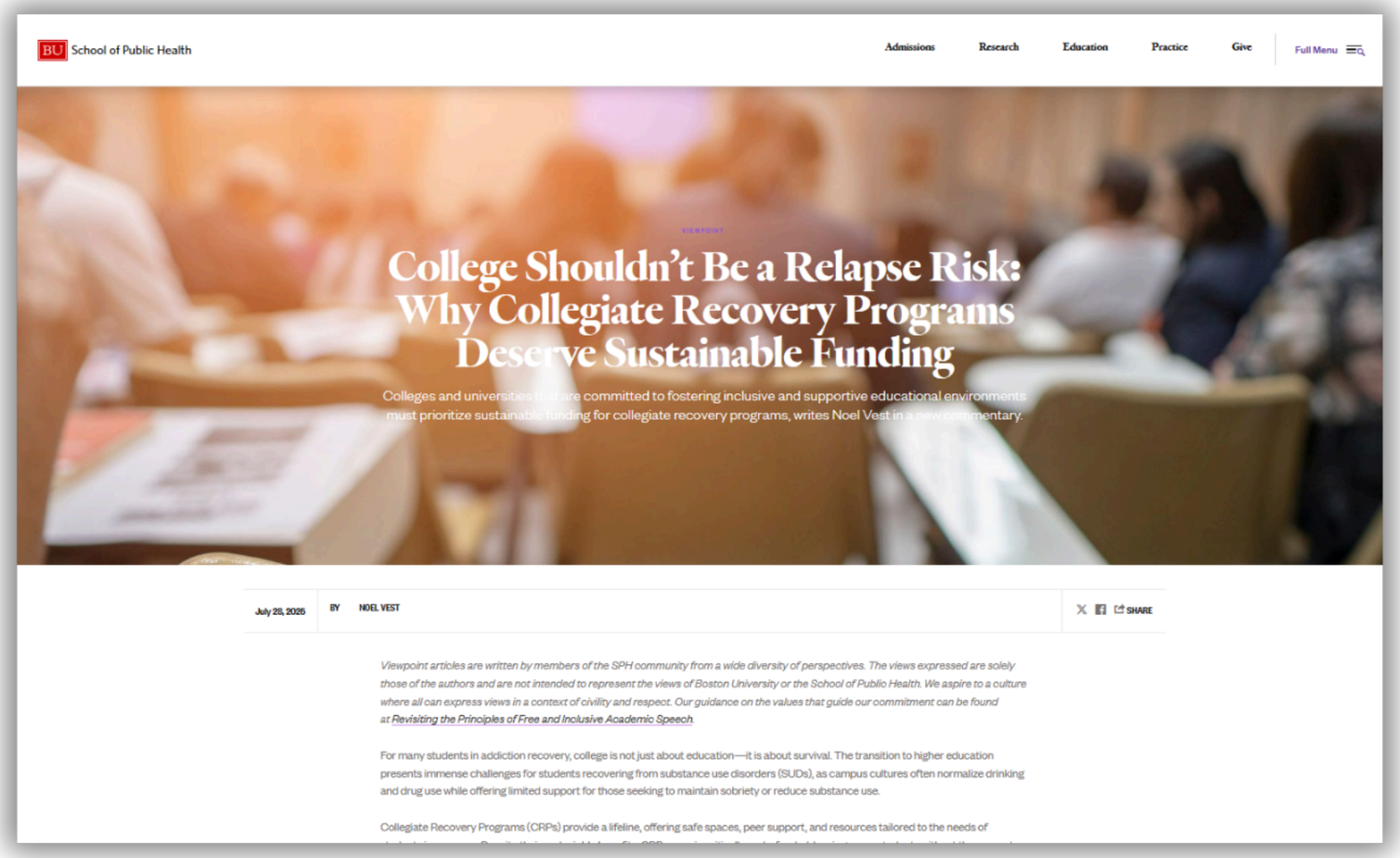


Inclusive Peer Support Groups Are Expanding at US Colleges, but Stable Funding is Needed

By Jillian McKoy

May 7, 2025



College Shouldn't Be a Relapse Risk: Why Collegiate Recovery Programs Deserve Sustainable Funding

By Noel Vest

July 28, 2025

Discussion

“Which funding streams do you rely on most right now?”

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Discussion

“Which funding streams do you rely on most right now?”

“Which funding streams do you WANT to add next year?”

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Tools, Templates, and Next Steps

Templates/tools to share:

- CRP annual budget template (expense categories pre-filled as an example)
- Budget Reconciliation Tracker

***Make a copy and utilize these spreadsheets**

- Accreditation Value / Justification Toolkit
- Conference Justification Toolkit

- Cost Effectiveness Toolkit
- CFRI Braided Funding Streams Article
- WVCRN White Paper: A Cost-Effective Investment for West Virginia
- Characterizing Collegiate Recovery Programs in the United States and Canada: A Survey of Program Directors (Vest et al., 2025)

****Utilize these Resources to advocate why CRPs are cost effective & cost saving, how to advocate for funding, and evidence-based research to support why funding is important and how it improves student outcomes**

Group Share

1. **What challenges have you encountered when writing budgets?**
2. **Do you have budget templates that you've found to be very successful?**
3. **Are there other budgeting tools that you find to be really helpful?**
4. **How have you successfully advocated for your budget in the past (for the CRP or not)?**

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Request Technical Assistance

Request Technical Assistance and Training
https://carsrecovery.org/

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RECOVERY SUPPORT

Any Questions?