# Sustainability Action Plan

The following sample plan shows action steps you can take during the first year. We recommend you do at least a 12-months plan and preferable a 3-year plan.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Plan Component/Method</th>
<th>Action Steps</th>
<th>Timeline</th>
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| **Develop Vision, Mission, Case for Support** | • Create internal staff team to guide planning process  
  • Discuss with staff and community members why this program is needed, who will benefit, why your organization is the best organization to undertake it.  
  • Identify and talk with other community leaders who might share common or similar vision/mission. | Months 1-3 |
| **Develop Goals and Objectives**              | • Develop a logic model to clarify sustainability goals, create specific program objectives, and identify measures to track progress and outcomes.                                                       | Months 1-3 |
| **Research and identify potential stakeholders** | • Identify priorities such as community engagement, strategic communication, leadership development, governance and management.  
  • Solicit ideas from other agencies, schools, and faith communities who might share interests with your program.  
  • Talk to local businesses about how your program can benefit their interests. | Months 1-3 |
| **Initiate relationship with potential stakeholders** | • Schedule community/partner meetings.  
  • Select team of helpful community members, agency representatives, and business people to act as advisory committee. Formulate meeting agenda.  
  • Prepare invitations and ask folks who recommended individuals for your committee to invite them personally.  
  • Prepare written materials for participants outlining the program's purpose and vision. Language should match community interests garnered from earlier research and interviews with community members. | Month 4     |
| **Analyze Program Cost**                      | • Clarify financing for services and outcomes.  
  • Map current spending and analyze funding gaps.  
  • With staff and advisory committee, develop financing strategies, evaluate options, and develop recommendations. | Month 4     |
| **Continue to cultivate stakeholders and create buy in** | • Hold meetings. Include shared vision exercise to get input and expand vision to more stakeholders.  
  • Invite press to cover a meeting, highlight participants and outcomes. | Month 5     |
<table>
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<tr>
<th><strong>Make the Ask</strong></th>
<th><strong>Follow-up</strong></th>
<th><strong>Be a Good Steward</strong></th>
<th><strong>Create and execute fundraising plan</strong></th>
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| • Always follow up and send thank you notes to participants. | • Determine best strategic partnerships and key community leaders to involve.  
• Determine appropriate level of collaborative commitment to ask for.  
• Determine who should ask for partnership involvement. Jointly develop strong “case” for potential partner’s involvement. Be specific about level of commitment requested. | • Formalize relationship with MOUs, volunteer position description, and formalize advisory committee roles. | • Identify any products or services of your program that are valued in the community and could produce income to offset project expenses.  
• Create a team and marketing plan to develop and market business.  
• Identify budget items that could be provided in-kind by partners, other stakeholders.  
• Select methods and teams for fundraising and resource gathering for the year.  
• Use more than one fundraising method (grant writing, direct mail, special event, major donor clubs, in-kind resource gathering, phone-a-thon, personal solicitation).  
• Select team members from your advisory committee, board, and other community leaders to act as fundraising committee.  
• Formulate strategies for meeting with prospects individually.  
• Prepare a fundraising plan with objectives and timelines.  
• Launch and execute fundraising efforts. | Months 5-7 | Months 5-7 | Months 8-ongoing | Months 8-ongoing (carry forward into Year 2) |

This sample action plan was developed using the following sources:

- **Sustainability Toolkit** developed by the Corporation for National and Community Service. Available at [http://www.SustainAbilityOnline.com](http://www.SustainAbilityOnline.com)
- **Sustainability Planning Workbook** published by the Finance Project. Available at [www.financeproject.org/engage/workbook.asp](http://www.financeproject.org/engage/workbook.asp)