Center Funding Expansion

From $180k to $550k+

VSBDC 2025 Professional Development Conference

Presented by:

Stephen Davis, Community Investment Collaborative
Rebecca Haydock, Venture Central

Reality Check: A Boat with a Hole In It

Beyond the SBA Model

Why Mission Driven Work Requires Mission Driven Funding

Reality Check: A Boat with a Hole In It

Business as a Boat

- Take paying customers from A to B
- Pivot (steer) towards profitable markets (those who pay)
- Fix holes or sink

This is what we help our clients do every day.

Our boat has a permanent hole

The SBDC (and nonprofit) Difference

Standard Business

Fixable holes: staffing, operations, costs

Our organizations

All the same holes PLUS our mission

We exist to serve all businesses and our advising is free of charge.

More success →More clients—> bigger or more holes in the boat

Reality Check: The “Extra” Work We Do

Getting People on the Boat

Serving Clients

Steering the Boat

Strategic Direction, Problem Solving

Propelling the Boat

Strategic Direction

Plus Bailing Water

Time/Client tracking, compliance, showing up in our communities, FUNDRAISING & STORYTELLING

CV SBDC Case Study

From $180k to $550k+

The Journey

New Vision → Partnership → Shared Plan → Build Trust → Gain Investment → Continuous Support

Where We Started

The Traditional SBDC Model

- SBA 1:1 match requirement
- Historical reliance on local ED offices
- Motivated Host (If SBDC success equal host success)

The Reality When We Started

- Low awareness of available resources
- Minimal staffing: 1 FT, 2 half-time, contractors
- Funding crisis: Shrinking budget, counties dropping
- Little infrastructure: No website, online confusion, low referrals

What Happened: The Financial Transformation

Total Funding Growth

2019: $182,500

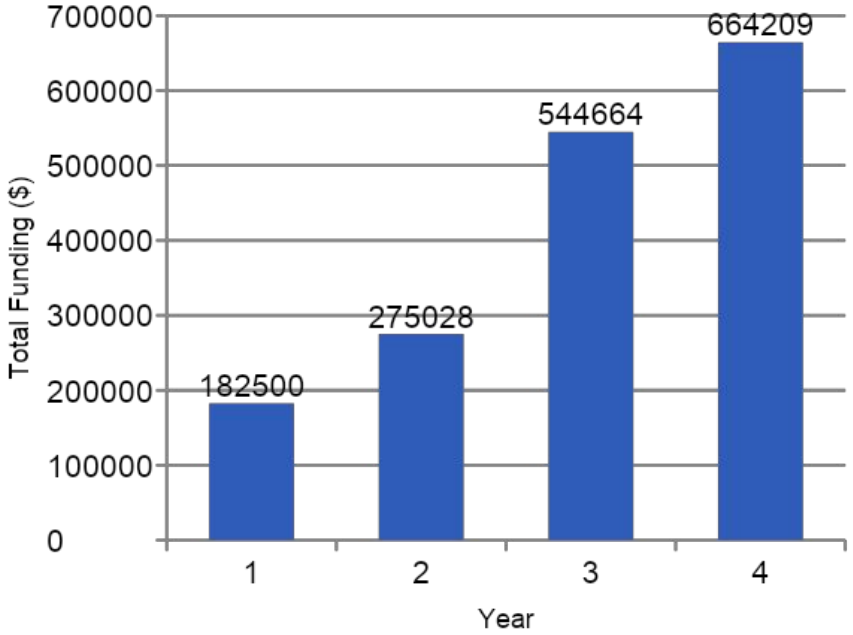
2020: $275,028 (51% increase)

2023: $544,664 (98% increase)

2025: $664,209 (264% total growth)

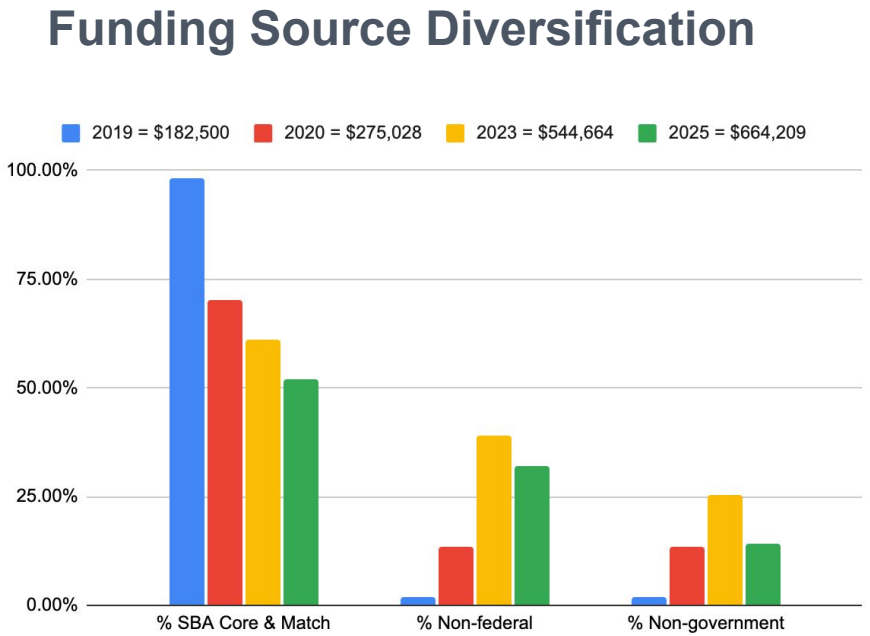
Key Achievement

SBA Core & Match dropped from 98% to 52% of total budget



What Happened: The Financial Transformation

	2019	2020	2023	2025
Funding Source	Previous Host	CIC as host		
% SBA Core & Match	**98.08%**	**70.29%**	**61.00%**	**52.00%**
SBA Core Grant	$89,000	$89,000	$114,000	$118,000
Local Matches (cash)	$90,000	$104,316	$218,250	$227,359
Other Local Support			$53,111	$49,000
CIC In-Kind		$16,378	$15,811	$6,570
GO Virginia Grant(s)			$21,000	$32,000
Other Federal SBA				$75,000
COVID related		$44,537		
Other Federal				$31,000
Virginia State Support				$38,000
Corporate	$2,500	$9,500	$44,000	$20,000
Foundations		$6,500	$75,000	$61,500
Individuals		$25	$1,355	$3,000
Program Income	$1,000	$4,772	$2,137	$2,780
TOTAL	**$182,500**	**$275,028**	**$544,664**	**$664,209**



Revenue Diversification by Source

2025 Funding Mix

Local Matches: $227,359 (34%)

SBA Core Grant: $118,000 (18%)

Other Federal SBA: $75,000 (11%)

State Support: $38,000 (6%)

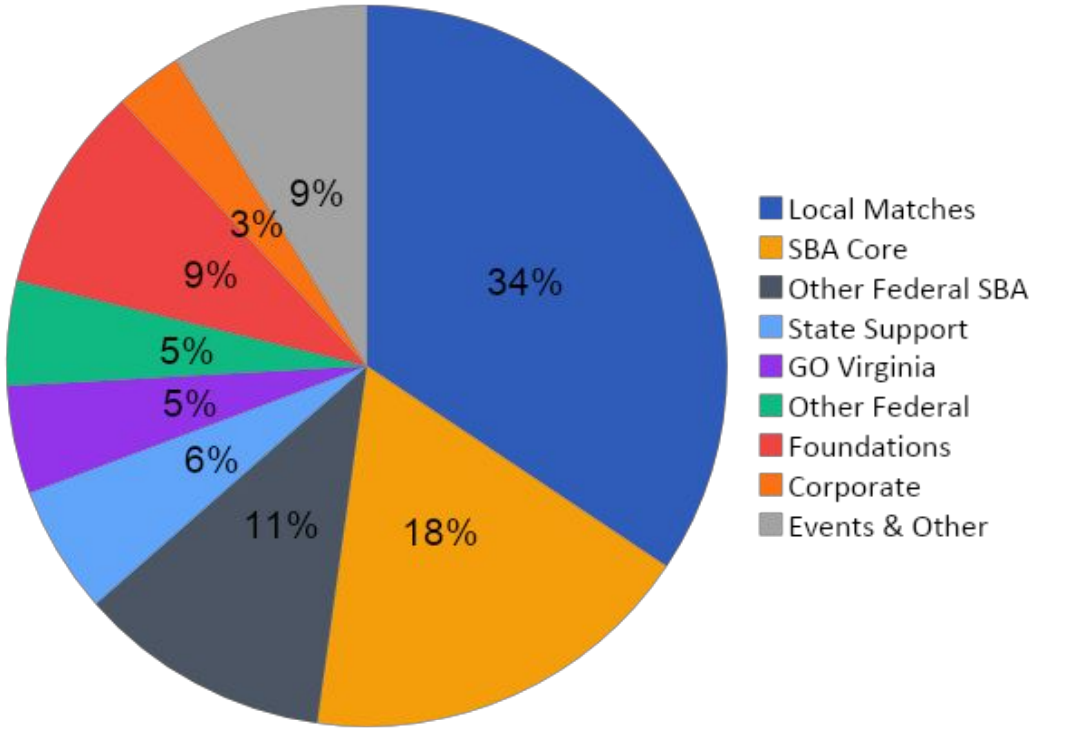
GO Virginia Grants: $32,000 (5%)

Other Federal: $31,000 (5%)

Foundations: $61,500 (9%)

Corporate: $20,000 (3%)

Events & Other: $58,681 (9%)



How We Got There

Step 1: Shared Regional Vision

Communicating Our Value

SBDC is uniquely positioned to serve your community

Why Helping SBDC Helps You

- Trained professionals in emergency resources & networks
- Specialized industry & financial support
- Technology commercialization help
- Market access: online, government, international
- Knowledge of local, state, national resources
- Scale existing businesses

The Start: Building TRUST & Collaboration

How are we different from, collaborative with, and additive to:

ED Offices

B.R.E.

Incubators

Early-stage support

Accelerators

Growth programs

Business Associations

Sector-specific networks

Educators

Teaching Entrepreneurship

Step 2: Partnership

Inviting Partners to Join the Solution

Help Me Help You

Asking for help and demonstrating value

Share Data

By municipality

Align Reports

With funding cycles

Educate

EDAs and BOSs

ROI Beyond SBA: Timely info, community building, educational programs

Madison County: $500 → $8,000

Step 3: The Plan

Delivering the Message

Our Vision: Serve Central Virginia like America's Top Performing SBDC

Creating jobs, growing tax base, increasing exports, building resilient communities

What We Offer

Accessible Free Toolbox: Programs, experts, data, tools, research, networks

Already Paid For

High Investment ROI: Matched by SBA, state office, federal partners

Already Paid For

Reliable Service: Consistent, professional support

Already Paid For

Step 4: Collaboration

Engaging Who Cares

Key Stakeholder Groups

Advisory Board

Partners in the mission, seat at the table

Host & Board

Staff engagement, mission alignment

Community

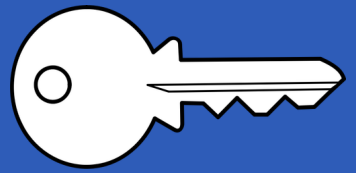
Many stakeholders to manage

Your Many Bosses / Interested Parties:

Clients • ED Offices • SBA • VSBDC • Host • Incubators • Accelerators • ESOs • Government Officials

The Foundation

Host



WHO CARES AND WHY

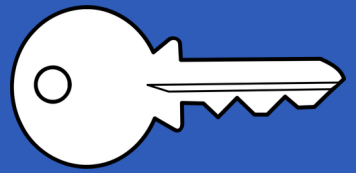
Establish ownership: **"This is YOUR SBDC"**

Host Engagement

- Reinforce how SBDC helps achieve host mission
  - Is the host providing a service to you or are you helping the host deliver its mission?
- Provide periodic board updates
- Be clear on needs and vision

The Foundation

Advisory Board



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Advisory Board

- Core Funders (and those you want to be core funders)
- Entrepreneurs
- Influencers

Spring: Annual report. Fall: Strategic plan & budget

The Spectrum of Opportunities

Per Capita Rate

Equitable funding model

Partnerships

Strategic collaborations

Events

Lunch & learns, conferences

Office Hours

In-municipality presence

Pitch Competitions

Entrepreneur engagement

Programs

Custom community offerings

Tips on How to Get Started

Start Small, Engage Partnerships

Build momentum with early wins

Meet the Needs of Your Customer

Consistent messaging is key

Remember: Your funders are your customers

Questions?

Let's discuss your funding expansion journey