

## Partners for Places Project Lessons Report

**Project Name:** *Catalyzing Indianapolis' Local Food System: Indy Food Council*

- **Year Complete:** 2015
- **Local Government:** City of Indianapolis, IN
- **Local Foundation:** Central Indiana Community Foundation

### **Project Purpose**

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To strengthen Indianapolis' food system through catalytic funding and capacity building, increasing access to healthy food, enhancing ecology, and creating meaningful economic and civic opportunities.

### **Key Lessons Learned**

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*Lessons learned about tools and tactics through the project that other sustainability directors could use to advance their work.*

It was pleasantly surprising to see that a number of high-level institutions were receptive to providing funds (both matching and beyond) for operation of the Indy Food Fund and Indy Food Fellows programs. This came at a time when finding sources of funding was becoming increasingly difficult. The funding support contributed to the momentum of the cause locally and nationally.

*Lessons for developing a collaborative process between a local government sustainability director and local place-based foundation(s).*

Sustainability Directors would do well to identify hot issues with broad support at any given time and seek funding while the iron is hot. The prospects of success for any particular effort weighed heavily on the degree to which organizations were inclined to donate funds. If a city Sustainability Director had a reputation for initiating novel approaches or initiating significant change within a system for the betterment of service of that system, the likelihood of acquiring funding seemed to be generally greater. The lesson is to paint the Office of Sustainability as an innovator, a creator of entirely new programs that benefit the public.

### **Additional Information and Resources**

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More information about the efforts of the Indy Food Council can be found [here](#).