



14

Business accelerator
program graduates
in 2025



260

Jobs created or retained
through business coaching
services in 2025

435

Participants across all VSJF
organized events in 2025



300+

Farm to Plate Network
partners statewide



2025 IMPACT REPORT



Vermont Sustainable Jobs Fund

7

Tools of the Trade
graduates



43

Businesses received
coaching in 2025



7

Organizations in the
Food Security Coalition



16

Energy-related pilot projects
in Vermont 2019-2025



VSJF Staff



VSJF 2025 Staff:

Back Left to Right: Jake Claro, Christine McGowan, Ellen Kahler, Kurt Ericksen, Dru Roessle, Anthony Mennona; Front Left to Right: Jessica Poulin, Leah Rovner, Sydney Lucia, Esther Erbe, Hannah Baxter, Laura Brill, Kelly Nottermann. (Not pictured: Janice St. Onge, Scott Sawyer)

Behind every success at VSJF is a team committed to making a difference.

Ellen Kahler

Executive Director

Janice St. Onge

Deputy Director

Christine McGowan

Forest & Fiber Products Program Director

Jake Claro

Farm to Plate Director

Hannah Baxter

Farm to Plate Network Manager

Jessica Poulin

Farm to Plate Network Assistant

Leah Rovner

New England Food System Planners

Drusilla Roessle

Wellbeing Economy Alliance of Vermont
Program Manager
(as of 9/25)

Kurt Eriksen

Operations & Human Resources
Manager

Kelly Nottermann

Communications Director

Anthony Mennona

Finance Director

Laura Brill

Bookkeeper & Contracts Manager

Sydney Lucia

Grants & Fund Development Manager

Esther Erbe

Office Manager & Events Coordinator

Scott Sawyer

Research & Graphics Developer

Celebrating 30 Years of Impact!

This year marks 30 years since the Vermont Sustainable Jobs Fund was created by an act of the Vermont Legislature with a bold vision: to nurture an economy that serves people, communities, and the planet. Back then, “sustainable development” was considered radical. Today, we know how essential it is—and VSJF has been at the heart of Vermont’s sustainable development every step of the way.

Over the past three decades, we’ve launched transformative initiatives like [Vermont Farm to Plate](#), the [Flexible Capital Fund](#), and the [DeltaClimate^{VT} business accelerator](#), and this year, we re-launched the [Forest Business Accelerator](#). We’ve supported hundreds of businesses, built powerful networks, and shaped policies that put wellbeing at the center of economic development. Our work has always been about connection—between economic sectors, organizations, and people—and about building systems that reflect our shared values.

In challenging and uncertain moments, it can feel like we are running out of time to change things. But in truth, we are always in the present and we can always choose how we want to contribute—so we don’t repeat the mistakes of the past and do our best to make things better for our shared future.

Given what is present in our country and our state at this time, it is more important than ever to pull together, united around justice, equity, democracy, and our sacred planet Earth. We must continue to foster hope. Our shared purpose is bigger than money and profits—it is about building a felt sense of economic wellbeing and community-scale businesses and services, for the benefit of everyone in our society and in balance with planetary boundaries. It’s about human dignity, agency, and caring for one another.

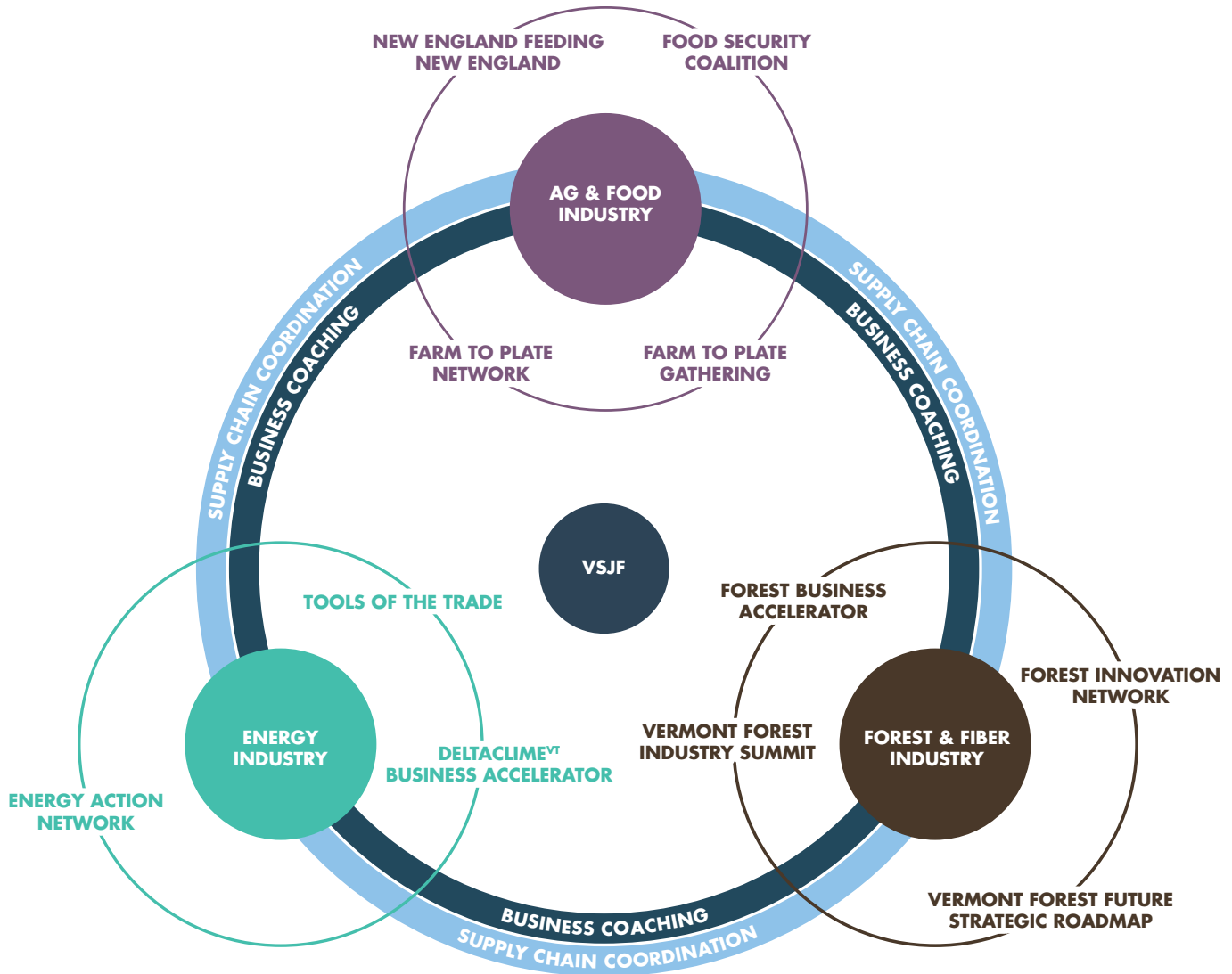
As we look ahead to 2026 and beyond, we remain committed to the long game, because the future of Vermont depends on it. The challenges we face are complex, but so is our capacity for innovation, collaboration, and care. We believe Vermont can lead the way in building an economy that works for everyone—one that meets people’s basic needs, honors ecological limits, and fosters a felt sense of belonging.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Ellen Kahler". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Ellen" and last name "Kahler" clearly distinguishable.

Ellen Kahler
Executive Director

What is VSJF?



VSJF is an independent 501(c)(3) nonprofit created by the Vermont Legislature in 1995. We partner with state government, businesses, and nonprofits to build a resilient, equitable, and climate-conscious economy that serves all Vermonters.

Our mission is to nurture the economic prosperity, ecological health, and social connectivity of people, businesses, organizations and communities in Vermont for the benefit and well-being of everyone who calls this state home.



What We Do & How We Do It

We provide business assistance, supply chain coordination, network development, and strategic planning across five key sectors:

- Agriculture and Food Systems
- Forest and Fiber Products
- Renewable Energy
- Environmental Technology
- Waste Management

Through cross-sector collaboration and systems-level thinking, our partnerships position Vermont as a state where social impact entrepreneurs want to start and grow businesses. We strengthen connectivity, alignment, and coordinated action across our networks to foster an economy that benefits both people and the planet.

What's in a Name?

Jobs or the environment? The early 1990s were characterized by a debate pitting environmental protection against economic development. Many did not believe both could exist simultaneously.

Sustainable economic development was a new idea at the time and it provided a group of socially responsible business leaders with a theme, a vision, and goals to work toward: Vermont could meet the economic needs of its citizens without compromising future generations or the planet by creating sustainable jobs that pay livable wages, support well-being, and contribute positively to society and the environment.

With advocacy led by Vermont Businesses for Social Responsibility and bipartisan support from the Vermont Legislature, the Vermont Sustainable Jobs Fund was created in 1995. Our name reflects our dual commitment to accelerating sustainable businesses and investing in Vermont's future.

30 Years of Impact: A Thriving Vermont

1995-2005

Planting the Seeds

Laying the foundation for VSJF's approach to sustainable economic development, supporting early initiatives across food, energy, and forest sectors through grant making and project management.

1995

The Vermont Legislature enables VSJF creation.

1995-2005

Early grants to organizations including Vermont Environmental Consortium, Vermont Green Building Network, and Vermont Biofuels Initiative.

1995-2005

Provided grant funding to the Vermont Cheese Council, Vermont Specialty Food Association and Vermont Fresh Network, enhancing market development and network connections.

1995-2005

Provided business coaching and technical assistance to 132 clients and more through peer-to-peer advising.



2002-2006

Cornerstone Project for Vermont Forest Products Industry launched, connecting institutions with sustainably sourced Vermont wood.



2000

VSJF supported Vermont Built Green Program to create residential green building standards.

2000

Supported Vermont Businesses for Social Responsibility Livable Wage Toolkit to help small businesses implement fair wage strategies.

2000s

VSJF facilitated Vermont Family Forests' FSC certification and sustainable forest business development.



2006-2015

Refining our Sustainable Economic Development Approach

Expanding and scaling systems-change initiatives across food, forest, energy, and climate sectors, with deeper partnerships and measurable outcomes.

2006-2015

VSJF applied its learning from early grant making and programs to structure support across sectors, focusing on market, networks, and business development at multiple scales.



2007-2009

Harvest for Use forest products supply chain pilot project coordinated by VSJF to optimize Vermont FSC wood flows from log to finished product.



2008

Vermont Bioenergy Initiative Launched—VSJF managing \$3.6M in federal awards to support small-scale biodiesel and grass/mixed fiber R&D and pilot projects.

2009

Farm to Plate Investment Program passed by Legislature, administered by VSJF.

2011

Flexible Capital Fund, L3C launched as a \$4M investment fund supporting green economy companies.



2014

Vermont Open Farm Week started as “CSA Open Farm Day” to introduce consumers to on-farm experiences.

2013

VSJF started to support food system plan and network development learning for colleagues in the other 5 New England states.

2012-2018

VSJF served as bookkeeper for Energy Action Network and provided financial oversight.

2011-2017

Vermont Agriculture Development Program—VSJF business coaching to 40 value-added food and forest product businesses.

2011

Farm to Plate Plan 1.0 and Network launched, with VSJF as convening backbone organization.



2016-2025

Scaling Systems Change

Strengthening programs and networks that build resilient food, forest, fiber and energy businesses, and local economic development.



2016

Retooled Vermont Forest Products Program launched, building on prior forest supply chain and market development work.

2016-2025

VSJF programs emphasized structural, systems-level change by making market structures visible to producers, supporting businesses at different growth stages, and anticipating sector trends.

2016-2025

A focus on environmental technology and innovation integrated across all VSJF programs in food, forest, fiber, and energy sectors.

2016-2025

VT Grocers Project coordinated by VSJF, supporting 200+ local grocers and improving supply chain collaboration.

2017

DeltaClima^{VT} climate economy business accelerator launched. Nine programs have graduated 68 start-up businesses between 2017-2025.

ΔClima^{VT}



2021

2021-2030 Vermont Agriculture & Food System Strategic Plan launched (VT's 2nd 10-year plan).

2020

VSJF becomes backbone for New England Food System Planners Partnership (NEFSPP) which manages the New England Feeding New England (NEFNE) project.



2019

Week-long Ranching for Profit School held, benefiting 9 livestock farms in VT, including \$66,748 in small implementation grants awarded.



2019

Farm to Plate Investment Program re-authorized by Legislature, administered by VSJF.

2018

First Forest Industry Summit hosted by VSJF, now an annual convening of stakeholders across the forest supply chain.



2018-2025

VSJF Business Coaching expanded to serve 20+ businesses annually.



2026– VSJF Into the Future

2026 and beyond—VSJF will explore next-generation strategies to advance resilient local economies and support Vermont’s sustainable development over the next decade.

2022

Farm to Plate Network 2.0 launched with new groups and new steering committee, VSJF as backbone organization.

2022–2024

VSJF served as fiscal sponsor for Liberation Ecosystem (formerly known as VT Releaf Collective).

2023

VSJF helps form the Wellbeing Economy of VT (WEAV) and holds 7 events with 721 total participants.

2024

VSJF begins exploring development of agricultural and forest-based fiber sector.

2024

Tools of the Trade coaching program for energy professionals launched by VSJF.

VSJF by the Numbers

Highlights reflect not just outputs, but VSJF’s approach to leveraging networks, building capacity, and catalyzing systemic impact

Total Grants Awarded (1997–2025):

216 grant awards made totaling \$6,420,492

Businesses Coached:

95 between 2005–2025

Jobs Created:

6,500+ in food system sector

2011–2022 Local Food Sales Growth:

\$114M→\$481M

DeltaClima^{VT} Companies Accelerated:

68 over 8 years

Pilot Projects Awarded:

16 with Vermont Utilities

Forest Industry Summits held:

7 from 2018–2025

2025

Forest Business Accelerator transitions to VSJF from VTSU to support growth of forest sector enterprises.



Helping Vermont's Entrepreneurs Build Stronger Small Businesses

In Vermont, small businesses aren't just common, they're essential. With 93% of businesses employing fewer than 20 people, they power our local economy, make-up 31% of all jobs, and reinvest their profits right back into our communities. Many of these businesses are rooted in food and agriculture, forest products, climate tech, and waste management—sectors where VSJF is focused.

Our [business coaching services](#) are designed to meet entrepreneurs where they are and help them develop the skills to work “on their business.” We pair value-added businesses with seasoned, C-suite-level coaches who bring decades of experience and a fresh perspective. Together, they build actionable growth plans that strengthen operations, boost sales, and position businesses for long-term success.

Our Impact

In 2025 alone, we worked with 29 businesses, and over 95+ since 2005, to help them scale sustainably. Our coaches go beyond the numbers. They help entrepreneurs sharpen their leadership, streamline operations, forecast revenue, build strong teams, and access new capital. The result? A holistic roadmap for both the business and the entrepreneur behind it.

2025 Business Coaching Clients



VSJF business coaches and clients connected at a June 23, 2025 retreat at Bolton Valley Resort, featuring professional development breakout sessions and networking. Photo by Kelly Nottermann.

This year, we supported 13 businesses through funding from the Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets and the Vermont Housing & Conservation Board's Farm & Forest Viability Program. In addition, we are providing coaching to

8 food system businesses, including five nonprofit food hubs thanks to funding support from the VAAFM and the USDA-Resilient Food System Infrastructure program.

Tools of the Trade

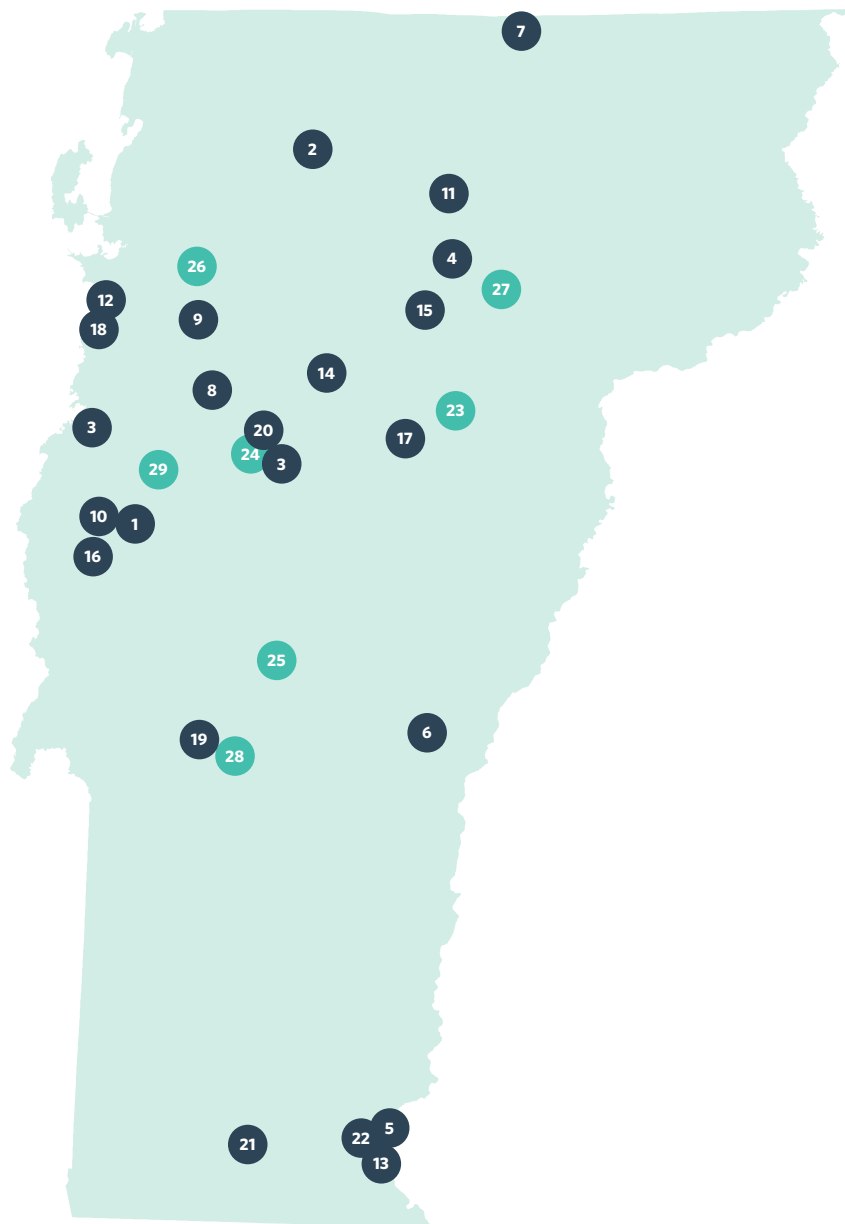


VSJF business coaches and cohort participants of the Tools of the Trade program—business coaching for energy pros celebration, which trains Vermont's clean energy contractors in business fundamentals. Photo by Kelly Nottermann.

With funding support from Efficiency Vermont, we are delivering a new type of small business coaching program called **Tools of the Trade: Business Fundamentals for Energy Pros**. This intensive cohort-based coaching program targets green builders and renewable energy and weatherization contractors to help them improve their business operations so that they can attract and retain more workers in the growing climate solutions and renewable energy fields.

We are excited to announce that Tools of the Trade 2.0 will take place in early 2026.

Business Assistance Clients Across Vermont



Business Coaching Clients

- 1 **ACoRN**, Middlebury
- 2 **Barred Woods Maple**, Belvidere
- 3 **Blue House Mushroom**, Ferrisburgh
- 4 **Center for an Agricultural Economy/ Farm Connex**, Hardwick
- 5 **Food Connects**, Brattleboro
- 6 **Global Village Foods**, Quechee
- 7 **Green Mountain Farm Direct**, Newport
- 8 **Krin's Bakery**, Huntington
- 9 **Maple Wind Farm**, Richmond
- 10 **Monument Farms**, Weybridge
- 11 **Myers Produce**, Craftsbury
- 12 **New Frameworks**, Burlington
- 13 **Retreat Farm**, Brattleboro
- 14 **Roots Farm Market**, Middlesex
- 15 **Sawyer Made**, East Calais
- 16 **Sunrise Orchards**, Cornwall
- 17 **Trow & Holden**, Barre
- 18 **Vermont Way Foods**, Statewide
- 19 **VT Farmers Food Center**, Rutland
- 20 **VT Bean Crafters**, Warren
- 21 **Wheelpad**, Wilmington
- 22 **We Clean Heat Pumps**, Brattleboro

Tools of the Trade Graduates

- 23 **Black Cat Builders, LLC**, Plainfield
- 24 **Han Hewn, LLC**, Waitsfield
- 25 **Lodestone**, Pittsfield
- 26 **Maheux Heating and Refrigeration, Inc.**, Jericho
- 27 **Solar Harvester**, Hardwick
- 28 **Solsaa Building and Energy Solutions**, Rutland
- 29 **VT Exergy, LLC**, Bristol

Investing in Vermont's Clean Tech Future

Vermont has a clean energy vision for its future, and our [DeltaClime^{VT} business accelerator program](#) is helping to make it a reality. Considering that utility companies are required to use only clean energy by 2035, there's no time to wait—we need to invest in our clean energy future now.

Each year, we bring a cohort of 7-9 start-up companies with innovative climate and energy solutions to Vermont to participate in our rigorous business accelerator. With best-in-class Lens of the Market curriculum delivered by ecosVC, we work closely with experienced mentors from Vermont utilities, energy companies, and business professionals. The cohort focuses on fine tuning their product or service and learns how to grow their clean tech business. One company is chosen by their peers to win \$25,000 and various utilities select companies for pilot projects to further test their products and services.

What's New This Year



2019 Alumni EVmatch secures a 2026 pilot with Burlington Electric Department to advance EV charging solutions for multifamily properties. Photo by Kelly Nottermann.

With funds from the Small Business Administration secured by U.S. Senator Peter Welch, we are deepening our investment in Vermont's clean energy future by initiating four larger-scale pilot projects between DeltaClime^{VT} alumni companies and Vermont utilities. These low-risk, real-world pilots will allow alumni companies to validate performance while their utility partners gain relevant data—paving the way for broader adoption.

We are proud to announce the following pilot projects have been awarded and we are looking forward to reporting on their results over the next two years:

[Bidirectional Energy](#) and Vermont Electric Coop:

Will install 3 bidirectional EV charging systems in VEC member homes, deploying a V2G software platform for monitoring and control, establishing a demand response program framework scalable across Vermont utilities, creating an economic incentive structure that demonstrates participant value.

[Noteworthy AI](#) and Vermont Public Power Supply Authority:

In collaboration with Northfield Electric and Burlington Electric Departments, Noteworthy will use innovative smart cameras and AI on existing fleet vehicles to passively collect and analyze critical infrastructure data, such as vegetation encroachment.

[EVmatch](#) and Burlington Electric Department:

Will expand on their previously successful work together to increase access to EV charging for up to 16 new charging ports at up to 8 rental/condo/multi-family building sites in Burlington.

[Revvit](#) and Green Mountain Power:

Will result in the installation of electrical infrastructure and Revvit's Level 1 EVSE at 1-5 home owner associations or condo communities throughout GMP's service territory. This will ease the range anxiety that can prevent individuals living in multi-unit housing from switching to an EV.

“Through DeltaClime^{VT}, Vermont's utility companies demonstrate true leadership by joining forces to mentor and support innovative start-ups focused on clean energy solutions. This kind of strategic collaboration not only accelerates progress toward the state's emissions reduction goals—it also positions Vermont as a rising hub for climate technology. The energy, commitment, and shared vision among all participants is both powerful and inspiring.”

Kurt Ericksen
DeltaClime^{VT} Program Manager

2025 DeltaClime^{VT} Cohort Companies:



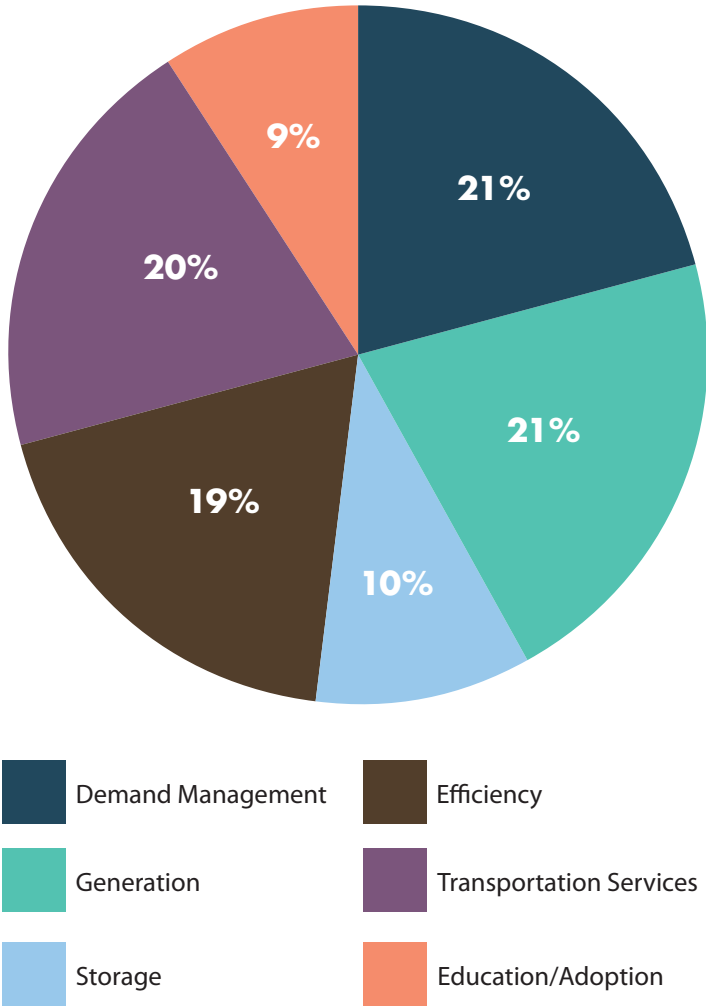
Entrepreneurs from six early-stage energy companies graduated from VSJF’s DeltaClime^{VT} Energy 2025 accelerator during the June 12 celebration in Burlington. Photo by Kelly Nottermann.

- **RioNadi**, Texas
- **Revvit**, Massachusetts
- **Soraytec**, Alabama
- **Sparkflow**, New Hampshire
- **VESMA Electric Inc.**, New York
- **Siva Powers America**, New York

“One of the program’s greatest strengths is the community it brings together—mentors, stakeholders, and fellow founders who genuinely want to see each other succeed. That shared energy is what makes DeltaClime^{VT} stand out.”

Hong Durandal
RioNadi, Founder & President
Energy 2025 Winner

2017-2025 Cohort Companies
by Energy Categories



2017-2025 Cohort Companies
by Ownership

	2017-2025	Percent
Male-owned/Managed	38	64%
Women-owned/Managed	21	36%
BIPOC-owned	28	47%
Veteran-owned	4	7%

Innovation in the Forest Economy

The forest and fiber products industry could soon be at the forefront of innovation, resilience, and the circular economy. New, innovative products, such as utilizing wood fiber for prepared foods packaging or wool fiber for insulation, present myriad opportunities rooted in natural resources that cultivate a resilient, thriving regional economy.

We are evolving our program to focus on innovators in our rural communities who are developing or expanding markets for natural wood, wool, hemp and other plant and animal-based fibers easily grown or raised in Vermont's rugged landscape. VSJF is supporting this industry through network development, supply chain coordination, and strategic communications.

Our Impact



Participants and facilitators of VSJF's 2025 Forest Business Accelerator gather to celebrate innovation in the forest sector, from sustainable materials to advanced technologies. Photo by Kelly Nottermann.

Just as the northern forest is regional, so is our impact. Our annual [Vermont Forest Industry Summit](#) has evolved to include more regional partners who strengthen our forest economy. And our work with the Vermont Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation, UNH Extension, Vermont Green Building Network, Smokey House Center and others is aimed at bringing together supply and demand partners who can address bottlenecks in the supply chain, and expand the use of locally-sourced wood in mass timber construction, packaging, energy production and other valuable products.

Introducing the Forest Business Accelerator



Bullfinch Earth receives the \$15,000 peer-selected award in VSJF's 2025 Forest Business Accelerator for its innovative wearable sensor technology for foresters. Photo by Kelly Nottermann.

In 2025, VSJF re-launched the [Forest Business Accelerator](#), in collaboration with Vermont State University and ecosVC, to provide forest business startups and seed stage businesses with a comprehensive commercialization curriculum and connections to industry experts, customers, suppliers, partners, and investors.

This four-month intensive program provides forest-based business startups with the tools they need to build and validate their business case, business model and go-to-market strategy. It is tailored to the needs of 'hard tech' advanced wood manufacturing and precision forest technology companies. The program culminated with a \$15,000 award to peer-selected [Bullfinch Earth](#).

Cohort Companies

- [Bullfinch Earth](#), Maryland and British Columbia
- [Carbion](#), New York
- [Fable Forestry](#), Maine
- [Fox Forestry](#), Maine

- [Home Grown Fuels](#), Maine
- [Pachyderm Industries](#), Iowa
- [PK Wood Pellets](#), Vermont

“The Forest Business Accelerator curriculum forced us to think rigorously about critical parts of our business sooner and trained us to communicate key concepts clearly and succinctly. The mentors gave us the data we needed to move forward confidently and led us to several potential customers.”

Seth Sternberg, CEO
Bullfinch Earth

Forest & Fiber



Junction Fiber Mill founders Peggy Allen and Amanda Kievet sort Vermont-grown wool as part of efforts to build a regional fiber value chain and explore sustainable alternatives to plastics. Photo by Erica Houskeeper.

Wool fiber has the potential to disrupt the use of oil-based materials in clothing, construction, and soil amendments. We explored this potential by partnering with a graduate of the University of Vermont’s Sustainable Innovation MBA program to assess the quantity and quality of Vermont-grown wool and its potential markets. In 2026 we will share the data with stakeholders who are interested in growing a local and regional wool fiber value chain.

Vermont Forest Industry Summit 2025



Regional partners gathered Thursday, June 19, at Bolton Valley Resort for the 2025 Forest Summit to strengthen Vermont’s forest economy: Program Director Christine McGowan interviewing forester and author Ethan Tapper. Photo by Kelly Nottermann.

We continue to support the [Vermont Forest Future Strategic Roadmap](#) by facilitating a marquee annual event aimed at bringing together stakeholders in Vermont’s forest economy to explore innovation with speakers from across the region. Nearly 130 attendees joined us for a full day of thought-provoking discussions and networking.

“I enjoy these summits. I always learn something new and connect with people with shared interests. I had a hard time deciding which breakout session to pick for the afternoon. I would have liked to have heard them all.”

2025 Forest Industry Summit Attendee

15 Years of Strengthening the Farm and Food Sector

For 15 years, the 300+ organizations that make up the Farm to Plate Network have been working to make Vermont's food system more prosperous, environmentally sustainable and resilient, and socially just. VSJF provides “backbone” support to the Network, enabling strategic coordination, collaboration, and action. Our work supports Vermont's needs today and for future generations

Farm to Plate's Goals and Impact



In July, the Farm to Plate Land Access & Land Use Topic Exchange explored community growing spaces at Vermont Garden Network's greenhouse in Landry Park, Winooski. Photo by Jessica Poulin.

Increase sustainable economic development and create jobs in Vermont's food and farm sector

Farm to Plate's economic development strategies focus on strengthening the capacity and viability of Vermont's food production, processing, storage, and distribution while increasing local food sales across direct, restaurant, institutional, and retail market channels.

- 7 farms received technical assistance as part of the Beef on Dairy Project.
- 120 people participated in retail trainings and received technical assistance through our Independent Grocers Project.
- 8 food businesses and nonprofit food hubs received infrastructure planning and implementation technical assistance for projects representing \$3.16 million in investment.

- Farm to Plate relaunched the Vermont Food Hub Collaborative and convened the 6 major food hubs to work on improving coordination of their distribution services to small farms and food producers.

Improve soils, water, and resiliency of the working landscape in the face of climate change

Farm to Plate's environmental sustainability strategies focus on climate policy, land access funding and financing, land use regulation, and supporting and incentivizing innovative farming practices that keep agricultural land in production while nurturing the ecological health of Vermont's working landscape.

- Advocated for F2P's priority strategies to be incorporated into the [2025 Vermont Climate Action Plan](#). Of the Priority Recommendations adopted by the Climate Council's Agriculture and Ecosystems Subcommittee, 64% came from the [F2P Strategic Plan](#).
- Identified two critical priority strategies from the Strategic Plan and the [Vermont Food Security Roadmap](#) as high urgency recommendations for [Vermont's Resilience Implementation Strategy](#)—a joint effort of Governor Phil Scott and Treasurer Mike Pieciak.
- Examined five local projects with alternative land ownership components, such as shared equity arrangements, which have potential enduring benefits to communities, farmers, and expanded racial and gender equity.

Improve access to healthy local foods for all Vermonters

Farm to Plate's local food access strategies focus on cultivating cross-sector partnerships, advancing statewide food security policy, and ensuring local food is readily available in all places where food is sold, served, or provided. We are a founding member of the [Vermont Food Security Coalition](#), a collaboration between seven organizations working toward making Vermont food secure by 2035.

- VSJF collaborated on the Coalition's 2024 legislative policy priorities, which resulted in:
 - \$450,000 in one-time funding for NOFA-VT's Crop Cash and Farm Share programs.
 - \$1.5 million for Vermont Foodbank, including \$500,000 for the Vermonters Feeding Vermonters program.
 - \$1.6 million in base funding for the Land Access and Opportunity Board to address housing equity and land access for historically marginalized or disadvantaged communities.
- The Vermont Food Security Coalition launched its website, a significant step forward in reaching more supporters and raising their profile.



Learn more about the
Vermont Food Security Coalition
at vermontfoodsecurity.org.

- Farm to Plate's CSA and Healthcare Community of Practice (CoP) contributed to [Dr. Deb Kennedy's 'Food is Medicine in Vermont'](#) assessment that examined programs across the state to identify strengths and barriers to access.

The Gathering



Farm to Plate Network members and partners gathered in November at Burke Mountain Resort for the annual Gathering focused on strengthening Vermont's food system. Photo by Kelly Nottermann.

This year's Gathering focused on the theme "Keep Calm and Collaborate On: Working Better Together as a Region in Uncertain Times." More than 275 attendees gathered at Burke Mountain Resort in November seeking concrete pathways for effective collaboration and strategic action while rising to the challenge of our times.

"I was incredibly inspired and learned so much about what those in the network are already doing and what is collectively possible. The most impactful element for me was increased hope at a difficult time."

Farm to Plate Annual Gathering Attendee

Increasing Local Food Consumption in New England to 30% by 2030

VSJF proudly serves as the backbone organization for New England Feeding New England (NEFNE), a 10-year initiative led by the [New England Food System Planners Partnership](#) (NEFSPP). Our shared goal: 30% of the food consumed in New England is regionally produced by 2030.

Building a Resilient Regional Food System Together

NEFSPP is a collaboration between seven state-level food system organizations and representatives from the six-state agricultural, economic and environmental departments in New England. NEFNE is the Partnership's primary initiative and is driving coordinated action across the region to shift food sourcing closer to home.

Our Impact



Regional food system planners gathered in October at Lake Morey Resort for the annual New England Food System Planners Partnership retreat. Photo by Kelly Nottermann.

To measure our progress towards the 30% x 2030 goal, NEFNE conducts [Local Food Counts](#) across all six states—using the same methodology we've used in Vermont to measure our success in growing local food sales from 5% in 2011 to 10% in 2020. The 2025 count is underway with results expected in late 2026. Thanks to newly available NielsenIQ data, we are updating our 2022 Local Food Count with deeper insights into regional purchasing at supercenters, grocery chains, and convenience stores. This will give us a clearer picture of where we're gaining ground and where we need to push harder.

Beyond the Count—Catalyzing Regional Action

The Partnership is also advancing key strategies to strengthen the regional food system, including:

- **Supply Chain Investment and Coordination:** Through the USDA's Regional Food Systems Infrastructure Program, we're helping build a more connected, efficient food system.
- **Land Production and Crop Analysis:** Understanding what we can grow more of in the region and where it is essential to scaling regional food distribution.
- **Capital Alignment:** We're bringing together funders, lenders, and investors to strategically organize around the capital needs of food system businesses across New England.
- **Retail Grocers:** In 2026, modeled after the successful Vermont Retail Grocers Project, initiatives will begin to assist independently owned retail grocers across the region to source and merchandize more regional food products.



Learn more about New England Feeding New England at nefoodsystemplanners.org.

Wellbeing Economy Alliance of Vermont

The [Wellbeing Economy Alliance of Vermont](#) (WEAV)—formerly the Vermont Prosperity Project—is a collaborative initiative working to redefine prosperity in Vermont by centering economic, social and ecological wellbeing. WEAV is powered by a network of changemakers and partner organizations, including the Vermont Sustainable Jobs Fund, UVM’s Gund Institute for Environment, Abundant Sun LLC, Vermont Businesses for Social Responsibility, the Wellbeing Economy Alliance (WEAll), and the Vermont Council on Rural Development.

Introducing the Wellbeing Economy Alliance of Vermont



Drusilla Roessle, WEAV Program Manager, promotes WEAV at the Farm to Plate Network Annual Gathering, advancing Vermont’s wellbeing economy through collaboration and systems change. Photo by Kelly Nottermann.

In November 2025, the Vermont Prosperity Project officially became the Wellbeing Economy Alliance of Vermont (WEAV). This name better reflects our shared vision for an economy rooted in care, equity, and resilience. The decision followed a thoughtful dialogue among the member organizations, sparked by a desire to clarify our identity and communicate our purpose more powerfully to others across Vermont and beyond.

The name “WEAV” emerged as the clear favorite, chosen for its clarity and alignment with our mission: to weave together people, organizations, and systems in service of a thriving Vermont—where wellbeing is the measure of success.

Looking Ahead: WEAV in 2026

In 2026, WEAV will deepen statewide collaboration by connecting networks, organizations, and communities advancing wellbeing-centered economic practices. We will share stories to spotlight innovative initiatives that demonstrate equitable, resilient pathways to a thriving, equitable, and resilient Vermont. Through storytelling, policy engagement, and leadership development, WEAV will amplify impact and foster systemic change across sectors.

Welcoming Dru: A Systems Thinker for Systems Change



In September 2025, WEAV welcomed Drusilla Roessle (Dru) as WEAV Program Manager at VSJF, supported by a grant from the Rockefeller Foundation. With deep experience in systems change and a commitment to facilitating collective impact, Dru brings the kind of leadership that helps turn bold ideas into lasting impact.

VSJF Board



VSJF Executive Director Ellen Kahler with board members Sabina Haskell, Noelle Mackay, Ken Linge, Maureen Hebert, Brodie O'Brien, Diane Abruzzini-Riggs, and Tayt Brooks at the 2025 board gathering. (Not pictured: Aditi Datta, Shelly Severinghaus, Cat Emil, Jean Hamilton, Anson Tebbetts) Photo by Kelly Nottermann.

Shelly Severinghaus

WSP
Chair through 6/25

Aditi Datta

Brief
Co-Chair as of 7/25
Vice Chair through 6/25

Noelle Mackay

Co-Chair as of 7/25
Secretary/Treasurer through 6/25

Maureen Hebert

University of Vermont
Vice Chair as of 7/25

Ken Linge

Vermont Bond Bank
Secretary/Treasurer as of 7/25

Diane Abruzzini-Riggs

Rigorous Technology

Tayt Brooks

Vermont Agency of Commerce and Community Development

Catherine Emil

Vermont Woodworking School
as of 7/25

Jean Hamilton

Land Access and Opportunity Board

Sabina Haskell

Office of Workforce Strategy & Development
as of 1/25

Brodie O'Brien

EnergyHub

Anson Tebbetts

Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets

Funding July 2024–June 2025

VSJF's impact is made possible by the generous support of our many funding partners including:

Foundations & Individuals

Angell Foundation
Canaday Family Charitable Trust
Claneil Foundation
Henry P. Kendall Foundation
Jane's Trust Foundation
The Lintilhac Foundation
The PCLB Foundation
The Rockefeller Foundation
Sandy River Charitable Trust
Vermont Community Foundation
Anonymous Foundation & Individuals

State Agencies

Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food
and Markets
Vermont Agency of Commerce and
Community Development
Vermont Department of Forests,
Parks and Recreation
Vermont Housing and Conservation
Board

Federal Agencies

National Science Foundation (NSF)
Northern Border Regional
Commission (NBRC)
U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA)
U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)
U.S. Department of Health & Human
Services/HRSA

Farm to Plate Sponsors

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Vermont
Cabot Creamery Cooperative
Center for Agriculture and Food Systems
at Vermont Law and Graduate School
Center for an Agricultural Economy
Chelsea Green Publishing
City Market, Onion River Co-op
Clean Yield Asset Management
Dairy Farmers of America

Deep Root Organic Cooperative
Efficiency Vermont
Farm Credit East
Hunger Mountain Co-op
Intervale Center
King Arthur Baking Company
Lawson's Finest Liquids
Mascoma Bank
National Life Group
Northfield Savings Bank
Northeast Organic Farming Association
of Vermont (NOFA-VT)
One Hive Foundation
Organic Valley
Passumpsic Savings Bank
Poulin Grain
Shelburne Farms
The Cellars at Jasper Hill
The Richards Group
The Skinny Pancake
University of Vermont—
Sodexo (Vermont First)
Vermont Community Foundation
Vermont Community Loan Fund
Vermont Economic Development
Authority (VEDA)
Vermont Housing & Conservation Board
—Farm & Forest Viability Program
Vermont Land Trust
Walden Mutual Bank

DeltaClimate^{VT} Sponsors

Burlington Electric Department
East Rise Credit Union
Efficiency Vermont
Green Mountain Power
M&T Bank
Vermont Economic Development
Authority (VEDA)
Vermont Electric Cooperative (VEC)
Vermont Electric Power
Company (VELCO)

VLITE
Vermont Public Power Supply Authority
(VPPSA)
Vermont Gas Systems

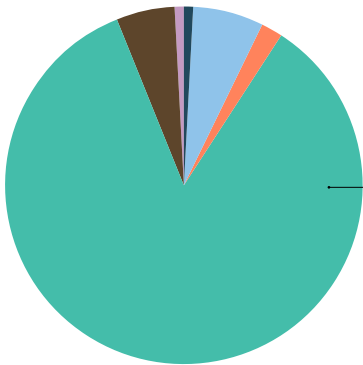
Forest Industry Summit/ Forest Business Accelerator

Cambium Carbon
Farm Credit East
Northeastern States Research
Cooperative
Northern Forest Center
Professional Logging Contractors
of the Northeast
Vermont Wildwoods
Vermont Wood Works Council
Weyerhaeuser
Vermont Economic Development
Authority (VEDA)

VSJF also provided fiscal sponsorship services for the Hunger Mountain Food Coop Fund.

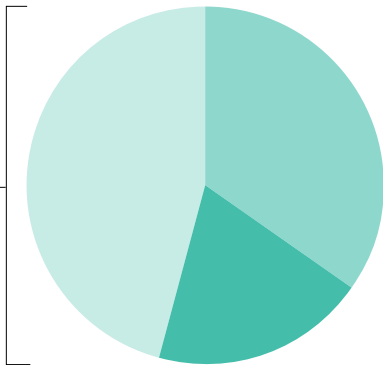
VSJF Financial Report, July 1, 2024–June 30, 2025

VSJF Revenue by Source



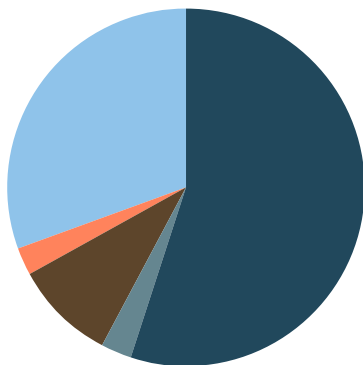
VSJF REVENUE BY SOURCE		
Interest & Misc. Income	\$23,754.21	1.0%
Fees for Service	\$157,532.32	6.5%
Special Events	\$39,930.49	1.7%
Grant Revenue	\$2,048,833.66	84.8%
Corporate Sponsorships	\$132,418.78	5.5%
Contributions	\$13,745.97	0.6%
TOTAL	\$2,416,215.43	

Grant Revenue by Source₂



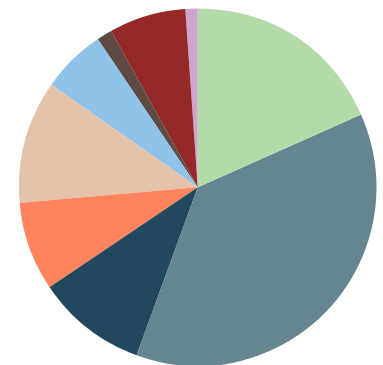
VSJF GRANT REVENUE BY SOURCE		
State	\$937,405.48	45.8%
Foundation	\$714,974.72	34.9%
Federal	\$396,453.46	19.4%
TOTAL	\$2,048,833.66	

VSJF Expenses by Category



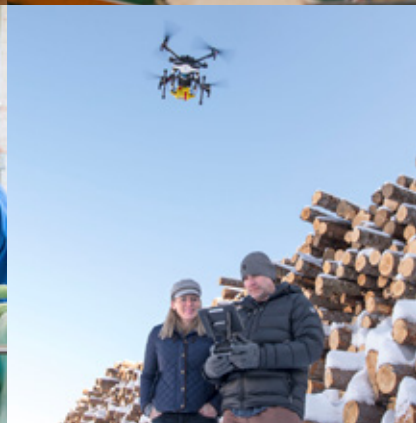
VSJF EXPENSES BY CATEGORY		
Personnel	\$1,353,408.08	55.2%
Grantmaking	\$63,350.00	2.6%
Operations	\$227,996.56	9.3%
Occupancy	\$58,876.51	2.4%
Professional Services ₃	\$747,120.44	30.5%
TOTAL	\$2,450,751.59	

VSJF Expenses by Initiative



VSJF EXPENSES BY INITIATIVE		
Operations	\$454,764.09	18.6%
Farm to Plate	\$911,638.03	37.2%
Forests Products	\$243,599.92	9.9%
DeltaClima ^{VT}	\$196,911.89	8.0%
Business Assistance	\$271,384.90	11.1%
Flex Cap Fund—Fund Manager	\$144,867.32	5.9%
Fiscal Sponsorship ₄	\$31,155.96	1.3%
New England Feeding New England	\$171,592.65	7.0%
Wellbeing Economy Alliance of VT	\$24,836.83	1.0%
TOTAL	\$2,450,751.59	

1. This is an unaudited financial report. As of January 1, 2022 the VSJF has switched to a calendar based fiscal year (Jan-Dec). This financial report represents revenue and expenses during the period of the state fiscal year (July 2, 2024–June 30, 2025). 2. Federal Grant Revenue Sources include the Northern Border Regional Commission (NBRC), USDA, Centers for Disease Control (via VT Dept of Health), and US SBA. Foundation grants represent private philanthropic foundation funds received in FY24 or FY25 but expensed in FY25. Some general support funds will be expensed in FY26. 3. Professional Services include accounting, audit, and legal expenses as well as special projects conducted by consultants which are related to specific market development initiatives and/or are connected to specific grantee and/or business client support services. 4. VSJF provided fiscal sponsorship services in 2025 to the Hunger Mountain Coop Foundation.



Accelerating Sustainable Economic Development



Vermont Sustainable Jobs Fund

3 Pitkin Ct #301E
Montpelier, VT 05602
802-828-1260

VSJF.ORG



**FOREST BUSINESS ACCELERATOR/
VT FOREST INDUSTRY SUMMIT**



DELTA CLIME^{VT} BUSINESS ACCELERATOR



**FARM TO PLATE NETWORK/
ROOTED IN VERMONT**

