

Narratives

Executive Summary

AARP Foundation is an existing grantmaking institution established in 1963. We work with organizations in communities across the nation to help the growing numbers of older people in crisis every day. Our work involves investing in innovative approaches and connecting struggling Americans that are 50 and older to programs, resources and benefits to help improve their lives. AARP Foundation is requesting a grant of \$1 million dollars from the CNCS under the 2014 SIF NOFA. The proposed grant period will be from September 2014 to September 2018. The main source of match is from AARP Foundation though we are eager to leverage the SIF award to secure new and renewed funding toward our match.

AARP Foundation is applying as an intermediary for the issue-based Social Innovation Fund (SIF) in the priority area of Economic Opportunity within multiple low-income communities in five states. The AARP Foundation/SIF initiative will be used to build on preliminary evidence of its pre-identified intervention: the Women's Economic Stability Initiative (WESI) by 1) using high quality outcome data from its initial community college pilot sites located in New Mexico, Central Texas, Alabama, South Carolina and Northern Florida; and 2) rigorously evaluate the program with the goal of moving it from one of "evidence-informed" to evidence-based. The framework for evaluating the WESI model focuses on three key and interconnected questions: Are women able to generate a steady source of family sustaining wages? Are they able to develop the financial behaviors and capability that help them manage their income effectively? Are communities building the requisite and sustained capacity to help older adults take advantage of economic opportunities to secure their short- and long-term financial future? AARP Foundation is uniquely qualified to support the focus, goals and approach of the proposed AARP Foundation/SIF initiative based on its work over the past three years. The Foundation has 1) implemented a competitive grant program addressing income, housing, hunger and isolation issues among economically disadvantaged people 50+, 2) researched and pilot-tested a relevant unduplicated program design that has evolved into WESI, 3) developed and enhanced user-friendly data management systems for supporting its grantees and monitoring performance and 4) developed a strategic partnership with the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) that will contribute to the success of the proposed SIF initiative. The primary advocacy organization for the nation's community colleges, AACC represents nearly 1,200 associate degree-granting institutions and more than 13 million students of all ages. AARP Foundation's knowledge of the older adult population and AACC's thorough knowledge of the community college system make this a powerful partnership for achieving long-term outcomes.

Narratives

AARP Foundation's theory of change posits that helping older people obtain jobs is not enough- successful interventions must occur at both the individual and community level to help older adults find employment in growth industries and increase their financial capability. Through the SIF initiative we will: Increase program completion rates from baselines set in 2014; track percentage of program participants who obtain and retain employment in quality jobs in high-need industries; increase work related skills and educational attainment in growth occupations; increase financial capability including savings, debt reduction and asset management; and assess generationally-relevant skills needed to serve older adults. AARP Foundation will use a competitive process and fund five community colleges in one of two categories: 1) those who want to initiate the WESI model; and 2) those who are implementing the model and want to improve it and expand their reach. For the SIF initiative, AARP Foundation has a 5-step approach for growing subgrantee impact by: 1. Creating networks and building a learning community among subgrantees; 2. Building the internal business case for integrating the WESI program into community college strategic plans during and after SIF funding; 3. Supporting subgrantees to use data effectively for learning, program improvement and decision-making; 4. Assistance with identifying sustained funding at the national, state and local levels; and 5. Promoting the deepening of local partnerships to expand capacity to serve older adults in their communities.

Program Design

A) GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

AARP Foundation is applying as an intermediary for the issue-based Social Innovation Fund (SIF) in the priority area of Economic Opportunity within multiple low-income communities in five states. The AARP Foundation/SIF initiative will be used to build on preliminary evidence of its pre-identified intervention: the Women's Economic Stability Initiative (WESI) by 1) using high quality outcome data from its initial community college pilot sites located in New Mexico, Central Texas, Alabama, South Carolina and Northern Florida; and 2) dedicating resources to rigorously evaluate the program with the goal of moving it from one of "evidence-informed" (or preliminary evidence of effectiveness) to evidence-based. Results demonstrating moderate and possibly strong evidence of effectiveness will be generated during the third year through a well-planned and well-implemented quasi-experimental evaluation, along with high quality implementation studies conducted during the first two years at all subgrantee sites. The framework for evaluating the WESI model focuses on three key and interconnected questions that are the basis for AARP Foundation's theory of change: Are economically disadvantaged, older adult women able to generate a steady source of family sustaining wages? Are

Narratives

they able to develop the financial behaviors and capability that help them manage their income effectively? AND, are communities building the requisite and sustained capacity to help older adults take advantage of economic opportunities to secure their short and long term financial future? We anticipate that the proposed AARP Foundation/SIF initiative will improve outcomes for low-income women ages 50 to 64 with a sustainable program model that not only "works," but also sets the stage for improving how economic stability programs are delivered to this vulnerable and underserved population, which is currently not reached effectively through traditional channels. AARP Foundation is in a unique leadership position to achieve collective impact through an integrated and intergenerational approach that aligns the strategies and agendas of community colleges and creates needed infrastructure to serve older adult women who struggle to achieve economic opportunity.

A.1 AARP FOUNDATION'S THEORY OF CHANGE: AARP Foundation's Income theory of change requires change at both an individual and community level to have impact. The theory posits that while helping people obtain jobs or advance to better jobs offering living wages is a critical element of financial stability, obtaining a job is not enough, especially given the circumstances of low-income older adult women experiencing prolonged unemployment following the recession. Even once an individual obtains employment, they often continue to live paycheck to paycheck (1) and struggle to address the personal financial issues that keep them from achieving financial stability. Therefore, the measureable outcomes for the AARP Foundation/SIF initiative will focus on the critical interplay between training for and obtaining a job AND building the financial capability to make sound decisions that reduce debt and rebuild savings. AARP Foundation's investment in the WESI Program supports its theory of change and related outcomes by creating collaborations between key partners to increase program completion rates and strengthen the bridge between low-income women ages 50-64 and the services, supports and employers necessary for helping them achieve economic opportunity. Building on the framework of the Foundation's Back to Work 50+ Program, the WESI model creates a continuum of services that will:

- 1) Leverage the AARP brand and variety of communication channels to effectively reach low-income, women 50+ seeking full-time, hourly wage jobs.
- 2) Provide immediate, timely services to help stabilize participant income and meet basic needs for housing, health, transportation, utilities and food in conjunction with job search services.
- 3) Offer coaching that provides personal advising on current job search strategies and is informed by local employers and training providers.
- 4) Link participants to local resources and programs to help them build emergency savings and

Narratives

reduce debt.

5) Facilitate access to short-term training and credentialing for locally-in-demand jobs.

6) Connect participants to employers and a targeted set of available jobs in their community

The outcomes for this SIF Initiative tied to our theory of change are: to increase (over 2014 baselines), the number of participants who complete the program; attain work related skills and education; and develop financial capability including savings, debt reduction and asset management. A longer term outcome is the percentage of participants who obtain and retain employment in high need industries.

A.2 AN ISSUE OF CRITICAL NATIONAL AND LOCAL IMPORTANCE: The recession and its aftermath have been especially problematic for low-income Americans 50 and older and the future is extremely uncertain for many of them. The recession has left at least 3 million people age 50 and older in search of full time work to meet their everyday needs. In addition to the obviously crushing financial impact, the unemployed person suffers lower self-esteem, poorer overall well-being, increased isolation and negative health outcomes as a result of their struggles. These personal tragedies are magnified in their impact by the chain of consequences that subsequently reverberate through their families, homes, neighborhoods and communities. Over the course of the recession, the unemployment rate for older Americans reached a level not seen in the past 60 years. The average duration of unemployment increased for older workers, as did percentage that were among the long-term unemployed (2). In addition to unemployment, nearly one-third of older Americans have seen their homes decline substantially in value and a sizable proportion fell behind on credit card payments or accumulated additional credit card debt. In fact, a recent internal program assessment conducted by AARP's Research Center noted that 42 percent of program participants had less than \$500 of non-retirement savings and 30 percent are more than \$10,000 in debt (3). In the course of AARP Foundation's research into the unmet needs of older adult workers, a subsection of this population was identified that is particularly disadvantaged in the current economic climate: unemployed women ages 50 and older. According to the U.S Department of Labor, the number of women ages 50 to 64 who are struggling with re-employment has more than doubled in the past year. The number is now over one million and it is growing. Many women 50+ have also experienced a major life-changing event, such as divorce, death of a spouse, or becoming a caregiver for their parents or grandchildren. In addition to the millions of 50+ women raising their own pre-teen and teen age children, right now over 2.7 million women 50+ are raising their grandchildren (4). Because of these and other life-changing events, the older adult woman finds herself in need of employment and faced with barriers

Narratives

that impede meaningful connection with the current job market and relevant services to address her financial security.

Despite these barriers, older working women are contributing to U.S. productivity in unprecedented numbers. They are part of the fastest-growing sector of the American workforce and their participation, representing over 35 percent of the workforce, is at an all-time high (5). In spite of their growing numbers, these women encounter real challenges in securing economic opportunity. The past few years of economic decline, slow recovery and related job cuts within nonprofit organizations and state and local governments, were particularly devastating for women. Along with the negative impact of the recession, older women workers are facing an array of obstacles in the workplace including age and gender discrimination; pay inequality; under-representation in management positions as well as in STEM jobs; caregiving demands and penalties; and a lack of retirement security (6). Women still earn only 77 cents for every dollar men earn and this disparity only increases with age. Underemployment is also especially prevalent among midlife and older women. Of men age 55-61, only 7.2 percent are underemployed; for women in the same age group, percentage jumps to 20.5 percent (7).

As the result of a lifetime of reduced income, women have less in savings and retirement benefits than men. In fact, almost twice as many retired women live in poverty as retired men.

Simultaneous with the challenges of becoming re-employed, many older Americans lack the basic financial skills and capabilities necessary in today's increasingly complicated economy. Lack of financial savvy among the 50+ exacerbates the consequences they already face with increasing costs of homeownership, education and healthcare, as well as the fast-changing financial services landscape, which is shifting responsibility to individuals to manage their own risk and retirement savings. Building financial capability that encompasses multiple aspects of behavior relating to how individuals manage their resources and how they make financial decisions is a critical component of building overall stability.

There are programs that are making attempts to address these issues. In fact, AARP Foundation has administered the federally-funded Senior Community Service Employment Program for over 40 years and has been one of the most successful national sponsors in helping low-income older adults transition into unsubsidized employment. However, the SCSEP program serves only those who are 55 and older and at or below 125 percent of the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) poverty guidelines. Current funding for the SCSEP serves only about 1 percent of even the eligible population. This means that a significant number of older adults -- particularly those in the 50-54 age

Narratives

range and those whose incomes are between 125-200 percent of the HHS poverty guidelines are completely left out of relevant employment and supportive services. The AARP Foundation/SIF initiative would supplement rather than duplicate support to those individuals not currently served by SCSEP or other federal programs -- particularly in those geographic regions where there are limited resources and programs available to older adult women. Moving women out of poverty and into secure employment and careers will enable them to become economically self-sufficient and contributors to their local economy.

A.3 GEOGRAPHIC AREAS TO BE SERVED: For the proposed AARP Foundation/SIF Initiative, we believe we can have deeper impact with a geographically targeted approach in communities where there is: 1) a high percentage of economically disadvantaged, 50+ women; 2) a high unemployment rate among this population; and 3) the opportunity to bring together key partners including educational institutions, workforce and support service organizations and employers. For the proposed AARP Foundation/SIF Initiative, we also considered states/communities that were philanthropically underserved. Therefore, we plan to focus the proposed SIF Initiative on 5 states in the southeast and southwest where all of these elements align including: New Mexico, Central Texas, Alabama, South Carolina and Northern Florida. Income data among the population ages 50-64 and employment and poverty data for these states include:

1) Alabama -- 18.2% have annual incomes below \$30,000. The state's unemployment rate is 6.4% and 18.7% of women are in poverty.

2) Northern Florida -- 20% have annual incomes below \$30,000. The region's unemployment rate is 6.2% and 16.4% of women in the area are in poverty.

3) Central Texas -- 17.5% have annual incomes below \$30,000. The region's unemployment rate remains high at 8.0% and over 19% of women in the area are in poverty.

4) New Mexico -- 19.5% have annual incomes below \$30,000. The state's unemployment rate hovers at 6.4% and 19.7% of women are in poverty.

5) South Carolina -- 18% have annual incomes below \$30,000. The state's unemployment rate is 6.6% and 17.8% of women are in poverty.

In our research of programs supporting the needs of low-income workers in these areas, we find that while there are some promising approaches, most are small scale and have not been rigorously evaluated. Therefore we do not know the extent to which they have impact; can be successfully expanded or replicated; and whether or not they are cost-effective (8). The work we propose to implement is unique among services currently available to workers 50+ (in particular women who

Narratives

are 50 and older) in the five geographic areas. Currently there is no targeted funding with clear evidence of efficacy and scalability to serve the 50-64 year old cohort of unemployed and underemployed workers. Low-income older adults who do not qualify for programs like the Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) have limited options for economic opportunity. A study by the Urban Institute found that several factors appear to limit the earnings of low-income adults, including: (1) lack of basic skills and credentials; (2) lack of access to quality jobs that provide opportunities for advancement; (3) limited access to key work supports such as child care and transportation; and (4) severe or multiple barriers to employment and opportunity including crises that cause individuals to be unable to find or keep jobs. This same study found that "few programs have had effects on improving longer-term employment retention and advancement for low-income populations or on improving the economic status of those individuals with multiple barriers to employment (9)." Research from the Heldrich Center at Rutgers University found that low-income older adults often face a variety of interconnected issues and challenges regarding their income, housing, long-term care, transportation, health insurance and more. While national, state and local systems exist to help mitigate these issues, they can be difficult to locate and even more difficult to navigate (10). With few exceptions, governmental policies and community services are not well suited to address the specific needs of older adult workers who face extended durations of unemployment and may need to undertake longer-term -- and expensive --retraining programs in order to find another job. The federal government's primary strategies for helping the unemployed consist of partial income replacement through Unemployment Insurance and short-term training programs for younger adult workers. However, as many older adult workers lose unemployment benefits, they are left without any source of income and unable to meet their basic needs. In addition, while interest in financial education is widespread and growing, a 2010 Brookings Institution research report found that "None of the traditional approaches has generated unambiguous evidence that financial literacy efforts have had positive and substantial impacts (11)." In AARP Foundation's own scan of the many financial education curricula that do exist, we have found gaps between available programs and the distinct needs and interests of low-income 50+ working women and their families.

B) DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITIES

Narratives

B.1 PROPOSAL TO IDENTIFY INNOVATIVE, MORE EFFECTIVE SOLUTIONS AND GROW SUBGRANTEE IMPACT: For the SIF initiative, AARP Foundation has a 5-step approach for growing subgrantee impact with long-term strategies that promote systemic change including: 1. Creating networks and building a learning community among subgrantees; 2. Building the internal business case for integrating the WESI program into the colleges' strategic plans during and after SIF funding; 3. Supporting subgrantees to use data effectively to promote learning, program improvement and decision-making; 4. Assistance with identifying sustained funding at the national, state and local levels; and 5. Promoting the deepening of local partnerships to expand capacity to serve older adults in their communities.

The AARP Foundation/SIF initiative will build on preliminary evidence generated by the outcome data from the 2014 community college pilot sites located in New Mexico, Central Texas, Alabama, South Carolina and Florida; and rigorously evaluate the program with the goal of moving it from one of "evidence-informed" to evidence-based within three years. AARP Foundation is uniquely qualified to grow SIF subgrantee impact and support the focus, goals and approach of the proposed SIF initiative based on its work over the past three years. The Foundation has 1) implemented a competitive grant program addressing income, housing, hunger and isolation issues among low-income people 50+, 2) researched and pilot-tested a relevant unduplicated program design that has evolved into WESI, 3) developed and enhanced user-friendly data management systems for supporting its grantees and monitoring performance and 4) developed a strategic partnership with the AACC that will all contribute to the success of the proposed AARP Foundation/SIF initiative.

1) Competitive grant process: In 2011, AARP Foundation developed its framework for the proposed AARP Foundation/SIF initiative and conducted original research and a literature review to determine the most significant root causes of financial instability among older adults. These include: Job loss and long durations of unemployment for older adults; Lack of adequate skills and educational opportunities; Insufficient income supports to meet basic needs; Lack of financial capability resulting in high debt and loss of savings; Lack of effective and coordinated community services focused on needs of the low-income 50+.

Based on this research, we conducted a competitive grant program to identify and fund innovative and strategic program models that address the specific needs of older adults in the low-income working class as they recover from the recession and the effects of unemployment. Through this competitive process AARP Foundation sought to work in partnership with selected grantees to deliver meaningful services to older adults and to reduce the length and negative impact of

Narratives

unemployment. The assumption behind our strategy is the recognition that the most critical element of economic recovery is obtaining a living wage job with benefits, but this is simply not enough. At the end of this competitive process, ten organizations were selected to implement program models for providing a continuum of services that addressed both the need to upgrade skills and obtain employment AND the need to increase financial stability by increasing access to benefits, work supports and services that help protect families from severe financial instability. During a two-year grant cycle, we were able to begin to identify practices that support moving clients from enrollment through different types of services and ultimately to employment. We were also able to identify barriers to reaching older adults, enrolling them in programs, and helping them successfully complete the program. These learnings helped us take the next steps of pilot-testing a more comprehensive program design.

2) Research and pilot testing program design: Simultaneously with this competitive grant making effort, AARP Foundation developed a business plan for a series of integrated interventions that would put into place a program design for expanding the reach of promising practices related to increasing the financial security and economic resiliency of older adults. AARP Foundation recognized that low-income older workers and in particular women, need access to local services to increase their re-entry into the workforce and mitigate the challenges of job loss, loss of savings and increased financial instability. This integrated economic stability initiative was launched in late 2012 and was designed to create a local, coordinated ecosystem of stabilization support, workforce service, benefits enrollment assistance and employer engagement to stabilize low-income, 50+ workers and connect them to specific in-demand jobs in their communities. Since the launch of the intervention, AARP Foundation has been building preliminary evidence that this intervention provides a client-centric way of doing business. The client-centric approach is enabled by customized technology that consolidates and intelligently distributes pertinent information about clients, services, resources, opportunities, effectiveness, outcomes and national and local trends that facilitate actionable dialog and decision-making.

In addition to what we were learning from our ten grantees, in 2012, AARP Foundation invested in research to identify the current challenges and barriers to low-income older adults achieving economic success. In three communities (Phoenix, AZ; Charleston, WV and Denver, CO) we conducted focus groups of low-income older workers as well as key stakeholders including community colleges, nonprofits and workforce investment boards. Findings from this research identified gaps in service for older working adults struggling financially and the unique barriers they face with finding

Narratives

and participating in traditional economic opportunity programs. Based on this research and what we learned from our ten grantees, we refined the strategies that make up our program design for this intervention.

Employing the strategies identified by these research findings and by providing grants to local community-based organizations, AARP Foundation began an initial pilot-test of its integrated economic stability platform under the title "Back to Work 50+." AARP Foundation provided grants to Arapahoe/Douglas Works, a local Workforce Investment Board in Denver, Colorado and Goodwill in Phoenix, Arizona to implement the model and utilize the Foundation's Impact System (FIS) to begin to gather preliminary evidence of the program design's effectiveness.

AARP Foundation provided significant guidance and oversight with each of these organizations and provided technical assistance focused on increasing generational competencies of frontline staff, marketing, communications, coaching and tracking clients from enrollment through completion to measure the results against established outcomes.

3) User-friendly data management systems to support grantees: AARP Foundation has leveraged a \$2.3 million investment by Walmart Foundation to build key components of a client support system and a data-driven service delivery model. This infrastructure includes the AARP Foundation-managed Contact Center and a proprietary technology-based client profile and management system, the Foundation Impact System (FIS) that allow for systematic analysis and matching of client demographics and psychographics with local resources, employment and training opportunities and financial services and resources. The FIS has been customized to include geo-code matches of participant addresses to local resources and programs and will be used by the AARP Foundation Contact Center and SIF subgrantees to track program participation, record the results of their enrollment in the program and to identify risks to program completion and mitigate those risks in real time. This robust reporting capability allows us to track results and make real time course corrections based on feedback from partners and participants.

In addition, AARP Foundation has invested in developing a highly customized version of the Virtual Career Network created by the AACC and funded by the U.S. Department of Labor. This system will support coaches in offering a structured step-by-step online process for participants to identify career options and credential(s) needed to obtain and retain a job in their chosen industry, locate an appropriate local instructional program and receive job search and networking skills and/or the academic preparation required for a specific type of employment. Our customized VCN is specifically designed to meet the needs of the population targeted for the AARP Foundation/SIF

Narratives

initiative and will support our work in providing a consistent experience for participants and data collection needed for performance monitoring and evaluation.

4) Strategic Partnership with AACC: From the initial business planning for this effort in 2011, AARP Foundation has been planning for evaluation and program expansion. To that end, early in the process and while we were testing different program designs, we were actively identifying entities that could serve as a "replication agent" for the work. The criteria for identifying this agent included ensuring that they represented a vast network of organizations -- and also recognized the unique needs of each locality; that they had a positive and trusted reputation and relationship within that network; and that they had mission alignment with AARP Foundation. With these criteria in mind, we developed a strategic partnership with the AACC and will continue to partner with them for this SIF initiative. AACC is the primary advocacy organization for the nation's community colleges. The association represents nearly 1,200 two-year, associate degree--granting institutions and more than 13 million students of all ages. AARP Foundation and AACC are bringing the strengths of both organizations to provide customized technical assistance to each community college and ensure sustained growth and impact of each program locally. AARP Foundation's knowledge of the older adult population and AACC's thorough knowledge of the community college system make this a powerful partnership for achieving the outcomes proposed for the SIF initiative. Our partnership with AACC will allow us to more than double the numbers served, growing from just over 2,400 people served in 2013 to a projected over 5,000 people served in 2014 based on current agreements with local colleges.

AARP Foundation and AACC are already working together to pilot-test the Back to Work 50+ program in 11 colleges across the country and will continue their partnership for the SIF initiative. In late 2013, AARP Foundation issued a competitive RFP to identify community colleges with the interest to implement and test the program in the college setting and to build on the preliminary evidence gathered from the original pilot-test sites: Arapahoe/Douglas Works and Goodwill. For the pilot program with community colleges, AARP Foundation identified states disproportionately populated with low-income women age 50+ AND where recession recovery was slow and unemployment rates continued to exceed national averages. As noted in the RFP, the expectations for participating colleges is to support the unique needs of older adult women who face specific and challenging barriers to overcome unemployment and re-enter the workforce, thereby strengthening the regions' overall economic vitality and promoting systemic change. As part of the grant, community colleges are expected to: Recruit program participants through the AARP Foundation

Narratives

Contact Center and hold quarterly information sessions about local economic opportunities; Utilize AARP Foundation's "Community College Playbook" for implementing the program; Utilize AARP Foundation's Impact System (FIS) for tracking participants, services received and outcomes; Identify 1-3 short-term training programs that lead to in-demand jobs and are developed in collaboration with local employers; Hold coaching sessions using AARP Foundation's "7 Smart Strategies Guide" model for selected participants and report topics covered and the number of hours of coaching; Create opportunities for participants who complete the program to have special access to interviews, internships and possible work opportunities with local employers; Offer financial capability/education, public benefits application assistance, housing counseling opportunities and/or other "wrap around" services for participants.

B1.1 MEASURABLE OUTCOMES: As part of the development of the logic model for the AARP Foundation/SIF initiative, we have identified the following outcomes that support our theory of change and the related metrics we will track to ensure we are meeting these outcomes. We will track these through our existing Foundation Impact System (FIS). Our goals during Year 1 are to serve and track the outputs and outcomes of 625 women (125 women per community college) who begin participation by attending an information session offered by the college. Community colleges will be expected to enroll a minimum of 250 women per year in information sessions, but the initial cohort to be tracked in Year 1 will be limited to enrollment that occurs during the first 6 months after subgrants are awarded.

OUTCOME 1: Increase in program completion rates over baselines established in 2014 community college pilots. Program completion is defined as: a. accessing coaching and income stabilization services, b. participating in training to develop work and job search skills, c. participating in financial capability trainings and d. conducting a targeted job search supported by the coaches.

OUTCOME 2: Percentage of program participants who obtain and retain employment in quality jobs in high need industries. This outcome will be measured by participants transitioning into employment. This information will be entered into the Foundation Impact System by coaches and follow ups will be conducted with the participant at the 30-day, 90-day and 6-month mark. Assuming the initial cohort for the WESI program cycle is from April 2015 to March 2016, participants who obtain a job by March 2016 will be included in the cohort, with data collection for 6-month follow up completed by September 2016.

OUTCOME 3: Increase in work related skills and educational attainment of participants particularly in growth occupations over baselines established in 2014 community college pilots.

Narratives

This will be tracked at the participant level over time via information gathered by coaches about credentials received, courses completed and degrees attained as compared to pre-enrollment.

OUTCOME 4: Increase in financial capability and financial goal setting, savings, debt reduction and asset management among program participants over baselines established in 2014 community college pilots. This outcome is tracked via a pre- and post-test immediately before and after attending the financial capability training and measures change in knowledge and financial behaviors among program participants.

OUTCOME 5: Service providers and partners increase generationally-relevant competencies and services as indicated by surveys of partner staff and coaches to measure level of understanding about issues facing older adults and by measuring the number and outcomes of core services offered to older adults as a result of their participation as a partner. Qualitative and quantitative data will be collected from program participants, coaches and community college staff with surveys and interviews conducted before, during and after each WESI program cycle.

B1.2 PRELIMINARY EVIDENCE: The vast majority of older adults are not pursuing additional education and training--particularly through higher education venues. In fact, those with low levels of prior formal education and few resources with which to access postsecondary programs often do not consider higher education a possibility. While some may venture in, they encounter numerous roadblocks to continued learning. Specifically, demographic, attitudinal and structural barriers impede access to gaining important skills and credentials to obtain good jobs (12). Lack of awareness about support services and insufficient adaptation of existing programs also can keep older adults out of the college classroom or prevent them from completing their goals (13).

AARP Foundation's initial testing of the program design and strategic partnership with AACC and the community college system are showing potential to change these dynamics. AARP Foundation staff have closely monitored the progress of the pilots through 1) daily reviews of entrees in the Foundation Impact System, 2) regular calls with grantees and 3) reports from our call center operations staff. For each grantee, we specifically monitor an internal "waterfall report," which tracks participants from initial contact to program completion to employment obtainment; we share the waterfall report with our partners as part of continual learning and to implement program improvements. In 2013 alone, and in just two locations, AARP Foundation served 2,461 people through our integrated Back to Work 50+ program on which the WESI is based. Using waterfall reports created from the FIS, we were able to track each client and the stage along a continuum of services they were experiencing in real time. This allowed us to better understand how participants

Narratives

transition from stage to stage in the program. At the end of 2013 and based on 2,461 people served, we were able to determine that: 78% of those who entered the program went on to register for an information session with the local grantee. Of those, 82% received coaching and 42% have successfully exited the program for a job. Our internal evaluation showed that participants noted significant personal improvements in their resume-writing skills, job-search skills and interviewing skills as a result of the program. Since launching the program in February 2014, 415 participants have attended an information session with 70% already in process for receiving coaching and training at the community college.

In addition, since implementing the program and partnering with AARP Foundation, the first test site, Arapahoe/Douglas Works, has completely revamped its programmatic efforts related to older adults services and, importantly, has begun to track outcomes for older workers coming into their "One Stop" location. As part of implementing the program, they not only enrolled older adults into the "Back to Work 50+" program -- they established new and varied pathways for older adults to access Workforce Investment Act funds that they would have been unable to prior to their partnership with AARP Foundation. Using data to better understand the goals, skills and experience of older adults led Arapahoe/Douglas Works to realize there was an untapped resource of older workers available to help them meet their outcomes of providing experienced and skills workers to their employer partners. The individual impact of this partnership is also significant. According to Joe Barillo, Director of Arapahoe/Douglas Works -- because of the partnership with AARP Foundation, he and his staff have been able to track information about program participants (the basis of the WESI model) who have obtained jobs earning them almost \$12,000 more than had they attempted to find a job on their own.

B.2 SUBGRANTEE SELECTION: Over the last three years, AARP Foundation has invested in its own programs as well as those of other organizations to determine what programs currently exist to help, in an integrated way, older adult women take advantage of economic opportunity. Through these investments, we have determined the following: 1) current programs tend to be "one-size-fits-all" and are ineffective in addressing the unique needs of older adult women; 2) programs that seem to work to help people become re-employed do not offer or evaluate the financial capability component that is critical to overall financial security; 3) programs focusing on this cohort may show positive outcomes, but do not have rigorous evaluation applied; and 4) the scalability of these programs are questionable because of costs and the fact that many programs are localized to an organization rather than being integrated into a system with the right people, processes and products to facilitate scale. Our own piloting with the community college system has revealed that while colleges are adept at training for

Narratives

jobs in demand, they fall short in offering coaching and the other key factors that help women build economic stability.

We believe that this AARP Foundation/SIF initiative has the potential to completely transform the way higher education responds to the needs of an important -- and often ignored -- segment of the American workforce, the older adult woman. By identifying and - more importantly -- finally evaluating the most effective integrated services, training and support for moving older adult women from vulnerability to stability, we set the stage to scale the program across the community college system as well as adapt the model to other systems in underserved communities.

AARP Foundation will ensure a portfolio of high performing community college subgrantee sites in five states--Texas, Alabama, Florida, North Carolina and New Mexico, using our existing grantee selection process. For the SIF, AARP Foundation will use a competitive process and fund five community colleges with grants of up to \$185,000 in one of two categories: 1) those who want to initiate the WESI model; and 2) community colleges who have one year of experience implementing the model and who want to expand their program to reach more low-income women, ages 50 and older and improve program quality. In consultation with CNCS, SIF subgrantees will be selected based on the following criteria: 1) willingness to implement the current WESI model and participate in evaluation activities ; 2) understanding of the SIF and alignment with AARP Foundation priorities and project goals; 3) program support from the college's President (including commitment to secure 1:1 matching funds); 4) understanding of the state, regional and local labor and services market; 5) presenting a compelling statement of need for their college and surrounding community; 6) expertise with one or more of the following: working with 50+ students; targeted workforce development programs; specific experience helping to place women in training programs and jobs; and solid industry relationships; 7) ability to align with and leverage existing programming (current coaching activities; training programs to be utilized or developed; established partnerships with non-profit organizations; similar grant or industry programs in which they are participating); 8) preliminary evidence of existing program effectiveness (graduation/completion rates; successful job placement rates; and relationships with employers in growth industries; 9) staff ability and organizational capacity to provide the following services: information sessions with a minimum of 250 candidates per year; coaching services provided to a minimum of 100 candidates (40% of information session attendees) per year; and 100 candidates (40% of information session attendees) per year entering a short- or long-term training program offered by the community college.

As is our current practice, AARP Foundation will require and support all SIF subgrantees in

Narratives

collecting the performance data needed to monitor program implementation and guide ongoing performance improvement. The process for selecting community college subgrantees will begin in January 2015, once the Request for Proposals (RFP) has been finalized and approved by CNCS. Five subgrants will be awarded in March 2015, with two to three being new grantees implementing WESI and two to three being community colleges who implemented the Back to Work 50+ program in 2014 (awards were made in January 2014) and wish to evaluate and expand their program to target low-income older adult women through WESI.

B.3 PROPOSAL FOR EVALUATION: The WESI program model outlined in this proposal has been implemented in various forms for 2 years, expanding in January of this year to community college settings. If it were to be supported by SIF, subgrantees will be selected in early March 2015 and the program model will begin its fourth year of implementation and refinement. To date, the program's effectiveness is informed by preliminary evidence, but has not benefited from a full implementation evaluation or impact evaluation. Given that a portion of SIF applicants will be community colleges that have already implemented WESI for a year, AARP Foundation will be in a position to select those colleges that have been most successful in implementing the model and who have demonstrated capacity to learn from successes and failures. In other words, they will be known to the Foundation and we will have performance data in our system (FIS), indicating the timing of various interventions and services, the stage the program participants are in and what community supports are in place for local employment and development of a robust employer pipeline in growth industries. Another portion of prospective SIF subgrantees will be community colleges applying to implement the WESI model for the first time, so we will be in a position to monitor and assess the start-up process for these schools, who will have the added benefit of networking and learning from the initial cohort of community colleges that have had WESI programs in place for a year.

By the start of SIF Year 3 (January 2017), AARP Foundation will have experienced the WESI model being fully implemented beyond the pilot stage for 4 years. Our plan is to begin with a high-quality implementation evaluation of all WESI programs in five to seven sites the first two years, which for the majority of community colleges involves a full cycle of services, education and post-employment follow-up for participants. In year three, we plan to initiate a quasi-experimental evaluation in multiple sites, yielding at a minimum, moderate evidence of effectiveness and potentially strong evidence within five years of program implementation. Our strategy for accomplishing this goal is outlined below.

B3.1 EVALUATION STRATEGY: Assuming that the timeline for awarding subgrants to

Narratives

community colleges is March 2015 and the WESI program launches in April, we expect initial calls and enrollment in information sessions to begin May 1, 2015. Based on our review of program plans and timelines for this year's cohort of community colleges, we expect each subgrantee to conduct at least two information sessions and enroll a minimum of 125 participants in the program in the first two quarters (or semester) or by November/December 2015. A majority of these participants will be assigned to a coach and within three months (by January 2016) this group will have completed basic job search/networking workshops, the financial capability training and perhaps received a scholarship to continue their education. By March 2016, we expect this initial cohort of participants to reach a critical mass of at least 75 participants per site, who are continuing with the WESI program and can then be categorized into one or more of the following groups: 1) in job pursuit, 2) employed full-time with a living wage, 3) attending an education/training program. This cohort will be followed until September 2016, so that those who become employed by March 2016 can be surveyed at the 30-day, 90-day and 6month mark to track employment retention.

Given that we'll have a maximum of five subgrantees in the first year, the sample size for this first cohort will be small at 375 (75 participants from each community college), not accounting for attrition, which in our prior experience has averaged 30% to date. However, this is a manageable sample from a practical perspective for conducting a meaningful implementation evaluation that not only tracks output and outcome data, but also includes qualitative data collection through site visits, observations and interviews at each community college several times throughout the year. Additionally, surveys and interviews of employers and program participants, including those who drop out, will be needed to understand how the program is working and the costs and benefits of participating from the perspective of participants and employers.

B3.2 TIMELINE FOR DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS: All quantitative and qualitative data for the first cohort of SIF subgrantees will be collected by October 2016 and analyzed by December 2016. During the first quarter of 2017, the implementation evaluation report will be reviewed by and discussed with CNCS and, upon approval, released and presented throughout the community college network, SIF learning community and other venues. If SIF continuation funding is received, AARP Foundation will be awarding its second cycle of SIF subgrants in January 2016 and its third cycle in January of 2017. Again, some of the community colleges previously funded through SIF will have the capacity and necessary program refinements in place to expand their reach, while others will be new. By January 2017, the potential exists to have a total of nine community college subgrantees, with as many as seven continuing their involvement in the program having at least a

Narratives

year of experience implementing the WESI model. Hence by Spring 2017 (SIF Year 3), a robust implementation evaluation will be complete for the initial cohort of five sites, the second cohort of WESI participants will be in the 6-month follow up phase and the third cohort will be enrolling in the WESI program. This third cohort will be participating in a multi-site quasi-experimental evaluation, with the planning and designing of this evaluation occurring well before, (program years 1-2) and with the benefit of findings from the implementation evaluations.

Two program cycle cohorts will be evaluated (2017-2018) in up to 9 sites, with potential comparison sites at community colleges in the same states or with matched profiles based on population, income, unemployment, size of the college, demographic make-up of the college, etc. Specific details and design of the study will be developed by the evaluation team which will include an evaluation partner under contract with AARP Foundation, who will also conduct the implementation studies, staff from AARP's Research Center, WESI program staff and AARP Foundation's Monitoring and Evaluation Manager.

B3.3 ASSESSING AND PROVIDING TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO SUBGRANTEES: The community colleges subgrantees will receive grants averaging \$185,000 per year (plus the required 1:1 match), which is substantially more than the average awards made this year of \$25,000. We expect that along with the matching funds they raise, substantial portions of SIF funding will support increased staff dedicated for the WESI program. As is the case now, staff time will be needed for quarterly reporting of outputs and outcomes into the FIS and increased staff time will be needed to work with the evaluation firm on specific data collections from various entities, including participants, staff running the program and employers. Technical assistance will be provided to ensure staff administering the program understand specific data collection needs and protocols and can work collaboratively with the evaluators to orient them to the implementation details of how their specific WESI program operates. However, individual subgrantees will not be expected to coordinate evaluations or hire independent evaluators to conduct separate evaluations of their programs. In the fall of 2014, AARP Foundation will hire an evaluation partner using an open RFP process, to develop an evaluation plan for each cohort of SIF subgrantees and to design and conduct a quasi-experimental study of the WESI program in multiple subgrantee sites with matched comparisons beginning in January/February 2017.

Technical assistance will also be provided to subgrantees to ensure they are tracking performance measures (program outputs and outcomes) accurately and that all SIF sites are collecting and entering data using the same set of definitions and implementing program elements with fidelity to

Narratives

the WESI model, which will be refined and clarified after 2014 implementation in 11 community colleges. This technical assistance will be provided by an experienced team of AARP Foundation grants management, program and evaluation staff via regular conference calls, online discussions, webinars, site visits and an annual in-person convening of SIF subgrantees.

B3.4 EVALUATION BUDGET: We are requesting \$200,000 in evaluation funds from CNCS, supplemented by funds from AARP Foundation totaling \$242,500 for the first year to: 1) develop the Subgrantee Evaluation Plan (SEP) for approval by CNCS; 2) conduct a robust implementation evaluation in each of the five community colleges funded by the SIF; 3) analyze data from the pilot project conducted at 11 community colleges in 2014 and; 4) assist with review and selection of subgrantee applications. We will secure an independent evaluator through an open RFP process who has subject matter expertise in current and past anti-poverty policy and programs spanning several decades, as well as a deep understanding about trends in growth industries and the economic and labor challenges experienced in our target states (NM, TX, FL, SC and AL). The selected evaluation firm will have knowledge and experience in the concepts of social innovation and entrepreneurship, with expertise in using multiple methods of data collection and analysis as well as an appreciation and commitment to using quantitative data to track outputs, outcomes and impact and qualitative data to understand context, processes and the meaning behind the numbers when positive and negative outcomes are found. The evaluator will be expected to contribute to the learning community of our internal network of subgrantees serving the 50+, as well as to the AARP Foundation at large and SIF's broader learning community. In years two through four, we expect the evaluation budget to increase, as sites are added and full scale planning is in place for the quasi-experimental study that begins in January 2017.

Organizational Capability

A) HISTORY OF COMPETITIVE GRANTMAKING

Since the establishment of AARP Foundation in 1963, grantmaking has been and continues to be a core component of AARP Foundation's programs. Grants consist of 40% of the Foundation's program expense (AARP Foundation 2012 financial audit). In addition, based upon Foundation Center's most recent data in 2011, AARP Foundation's total grants in the aging space is the 4th largest among all other grantmakers in that same space (\$16.8 million). A significant component of AARP Foundation's grantmaking has been its open grant competitions. Most recently over the past three years, AARP Foundation has had two national competitive grant making rounds each year in support of its four Impact areas (Income, Hunger, Housing and Isolation). The Income competitive grant program, in

Narratives

2011, focused on innovative solutions for recession recovery for low-income older workers. The Hunger grant program, also in 2011, focused on innovative solutions to reduce food insecurity among older adults. The Foundation received nearly a thousand applications combined for the Income and Hunger program. Ten grants for each program were distributed totaling \$3.7 million. In 2012, the Foundation established two more competitive grant programs for the other two impact areas: Housing and Isolation. Isolation sought to identify innovative ideas in order to build social connections among low-income older adults. Housing focused more narrowly on home repair programs for low-income older adults that provided cost-effective solutions to ensure their homes were safe and secure as they age. Though both were narrow in scope, several hundred applications were received. Four grants were distributed each for the Housing program and Isolation programs totaling \$1.5 million. In 2013, the Foundation undertook efforts to develop a new intergenerational reverse mentoring program, "Mentor Up," and utilized a competitive grant program to identify new solutions to engage young people in volunteering to support older adults.

Developing any competitive grant program begins with determining the outcome we are seeking to achieve. Once our outcome is identified, we are then able to craft the RFP to provide the necessary clarity around the type of organization and project we are seeking to fund and provide clear and measurable criteria to assess the merits of each proposal. For all of the programs, this framework has been consistently applied and has identified the best group of candidates at the time of selection. The Foundation has created a two-stage process for grantees.

The first stage requests a Letter of Inquiry (LOI) from the nonprofit to determine eligibility (e.g., AARP Foundation does not make grant to individuals). While the LOI is focused on eligibility, therefore only requiring an internal review, the second stage, full application, includes a combination of internal staff and external subject matter experts to assist with the review. Each proposal is scored and then discussed to determine qualifications and rankings. Finalists then undergo a due diligence process that includes financial review (audited financial statements, A-133 audit, 990, etc.) as well as interviews and site visits.

Once awards are made, each grantee is served by a project team, including a program manager (primary point of contact for the grantee) and representatives from grants management, communications, strategic planning and evaluation. There is also active engagement from finance, operations and the development department when applicable. This team structure allows the Foundation to allocate its resources most effectively over a large portfolio of grantees while providing the grantees with the specialized technical support that each team member can provide.

Narratives

AARP Foundation recently migrated to a new online grants management system -- Foundation Connect -- which is based on the Salesforce platform. The system is currently utilized for online applications and reporting, including inputs for capturing grantee metrics and performance measures. The system is fully customizable to meet the needs of different projects, including SIF grants management and reporting processes.

Complementing these assets, we can utilize the Foundation's and AARP's marketing and outreach capabilities including AARP state offices, which has an on the ground presence nationwide, to provide multiple channels of communication for the competitive grant announcement. In addition, the Foundation's collaboration with AACC will also facilitate marketing of the open competition for subgrantees and they will participate as a full, collaborating partner in the grant review process. AACC understands the goal of the proposed program and will further contribute to defining the criteria for selection, as well as the strategy for marketing and outreach, to ensure the most competitive and qualified community colleges apply to be SIF subgrantees. AACC's knowledge of the different colleges provide a deeper layer of insight to determine the capacity of each applicant in executing the program and raising matching funds as part of due diligence review of the applicants. The experience the Foundation has demonstrated over the past three years through its competitive grants program and the collaboration with AACC as part of the SIF subgrantee identification and selection process, demonstrates the Foundation's capacity to undertake the subgrant selection process outlined in this application.

B) EXPERIENCE GROWING PROGRAM IMPACT

The goal of AARP Foundation's entire competitive grant making is to identify organizations that have the capacity and the skills to replicate or expand a project. In order to scale a project, AARP Foundation requires preliminary evidence (similar to SIF's definition: evidence based on a reasonable hypothesis supported by credible data) to determine if the project is making any impact. The greater the evidence, the more funding AARP Foundation is willing to provide. Our first step with all of its grantees is to ensure they have established a clear theory of change through the framework of a logic model and utilize that logic model as a constant reference in their project. AARP Foundation works with each organization in refining the logic model to establish a clear theory of change, a clear outcome and how the outcome will be measured.

Part of the resources we provide in developing the logic model is determining what data needs to be captured and how it will be captured. Within this area the Foundation is supported by AARP's Research Center to assist in developing evaluation plans and data collection tools needed to measure

Narratives

outputs and outcomes. The Foundation then provides the grantees with these tools (such as pre- and post-surveys administered before and after a program to measure changes in knowledge, behavior and perceptions of social support). The AARP Research Center also provides in-depth analysis of publicly available data as well as data captured by the grantees. AARP Research Center conducts its own original research and is able to leverage additional resources and expertise as needed by working with external research firms that assist in data collection, entry and analysis. AARP Research Center consists of 58 staff, 15 of which hold doctoral degrees. In addition to research skills, they bring deep subject matter expertise in gerontology and the issues people 50+ face with regard to health care, financial security, new technologies, social isolation, caregiving, long-term care, housing and aging in place.

In addition, AARP Foundation's Foundation Connect and Foundation Impact tools both provide robust databases that can capture critical information about participants as they move through the program -- these technical costs are absorbed by the Foundation as the building of such database systems can be costly. Rather, the Foundation has invested in this database infrastructure to allow grantees with diverse programs to 'plug in' and share output and outcome data, as well as qualitative data across each impact area. The information captured helps the Foundation to assess the efficacy of the programs it funds.

B.1 SPECIFIC EXAMPLES OF HOW THE FOUNDATION HAS SUPPORTED PROGRAM

GROWTH AND EXPANSION: Through its grantmaking experience, AARP Foundation has focused on supporting grantees' program growth and expansion. Two of these examples are provided below.

1) The WorkPlace's "Platform to Employment" Program: One illustrative example of how the Foundation has supported program expansion has been through its work with the nonprofit and Workforce Investment Board: The WorkPlace, Inc., which was one of ten Income Program grants funded in 2011. The purpose of the grant was to help the organization determine "replicability" of a program, Platform to Employment (P2E), that already had preliminary evidence of success. The initial grant focused on increasing the number of people served in The WorkPlace's original geographic area as a first test of implementing the program. The results showed that the model was working and producing results. Therefore, in 2013 the Foundation agreed to support The WorkPlace to identify 12 new markets for expansion. AARP Foundation worked to promote The WorkPlace through its marketing and outreach efforts (local and national), increasing awareness in local markets, which led to additional fundraising opportunities. As a result, The WorkPlace added two more markets during the time of the grant. With its continued success, The WorkPlace in 2014 expanded into five

Narratives

more markets with additional funding from AARP Foundation. The Foundation's support, both financial and technical, has provided an opportunity for sustainability of these programs in the new locations.

2) Action for Boston Community Development (ABCD): ABCD was a 2011 grant recipient through our Hunger Impact Area that was selected in part because it already had a program evaluation partner in Brandeis University. Our grant helped cover the curriculum development costs of a nutrition education program as well as the evaluation of that curriculum. Similar to The WorkPlace, we were able to provide the financial and technical assistance for continued growth throughout all of Boston and our latest funding support provides an opportunity for the nutrition program to expand beyond the surrounding communities to other regions. Beyond our funding, we also brokered a relationship between ABCD and the AARP Massachusetts state office as part of educating policy makers about the importance of nutrition education that reaches older adults at risk of hunger. This included the state office and ABCD convening summits with hunger and nutrition leaders in the Boston area to identify root causes of hunger among older adults and how ABCD can help address them. In addition, the AARP Massachusetts state office (as do all state offices) has a significant group of volunteers and has included ABCD's program with the portfolio of programs in which local volunteers can serve.

B.2 CAPTURING AND SHARING BEST PRACTICES: AARP Foundation considers itself a learning organization. As such, we complete detailed "after action reports" following any major activity that are posted internally, shared with partners and include interviews with all key constituents. The after action reports describe what worked, what didn't worked, what needs to be improved and what should be eliminated. We believe this consistent reflection and documentation of our work allows us to identify best practices and learnings from each of our projects and when applicable, share this information with our grantees and funders. The after action reports will be incorporated throughout the proposed AARP Foundation/SIF initiative, with separate reports for each stage, such as development of the RFP, the subgrantee selection process and the evolving roles of our collaborating partners (AACC, Community Colleges, contractors and evaluation partner). These reports will be made available to CNCS/SIF so we can share what we've learned and contribute to the broader SIF learning community. AARP Foundation is a strong advocate of sharing data and conducting analyses of qualitative and quantitative data. The Foundation Impact system allows us to develop reports and conduct analysis on the status of each program on the participant level. Analyzing the data to determine what program is working more effectively than others has limited success in a silo. Rather,

Narratives

the Foundation shares and reviews the data with the grantees so they understand how the program is working and what tweaks need to occur to ensure it is achieving its objectives. These practices are consistently applied across all of our grant programs. In addition, we believe sharing our evaluation findings across the SIF network is extremely important and in turn reviewing the work of other SIF intermediaries, so all involved can gain a deep understanding of what works well in expanding and replicating successful program models, but also what doesn't work well.

Creating an open environment that supports learning and applying evidence gained from failures as well as successes, are areas in which AARP Foundation is ready and willing to play a leadership role.

C) EVALUATION EXPERIENCE

Every grantee of AARP Foundation must complete a logic model, using an established framework, as part of their grant application (we currently have 62 active grantees). Once organizations are awarded grants, we work intensely to refine the logic model so that the theory of change and outcomes are clear and measurable. This rigorous approach helps define AARP Foundation's outcome-based approach to grant making.

C.1 USING RESULTS TO INFORM INVESTMENT STRATEGIES: As noted earlier, AARP Foundation provided grants to 20 organizations in 2011 with most grant cycles ending in December, 2013. The first two-thirds of each funding cycle focused on project execution and data gathering. The last third included an assessment component to determine which grantees had sufficient capacity and evidence of an effective program to support expansion. Through this assessment, we identified three organizations each in Hunger and Income that achieved "success" informed by preliminary evidence, which resulted in two-year continuation grants for all six organizations. This same approach takes place with our targeted grants. Evidence is critical in determining what we invest in and how we make funding decisions. We break our investment process into multiple stages (Pilot, Preliminary Expansion, Progressive Expansion and Sustainability). Between each stage is a gate, which the project cannot pass through unless it has met the Foundation's criteria to advance to the next stage. The further a project has progressed along this continuum, the greater the evidence needed to advance to the next stage, which may result in increased funding. The final stage not only needs an independent evaluation that clearly demonstrates program effectiveness but also the funding model necessary to achieve sustainability. In addition, with the Foundation's focus on outcome-based grantmaking, the more information we obtain to narrow our specific outcomes, the more specific we are in our grant competitions. The application of the evidence provides for a narrower group of eligible organizations

Narratives

that results in fewer applications, but each application is higher quality and more relevant to AARP Foundation's goals. For example, with our Mentor Up program, our initial focus has been fairly broad in finding innovative solutions around reverse mentoring to bridge the intergenerational gaps that often exist today between younger and older adults. Based on our preliminary research, we have found the most impactful target area is technology education solutions -- particularly in ethnically and racially diverse neighborhoods -- that are already in place. As we prepare another competitive Mentor Up grant program, we are now able to narrow the focus to a more targeted group of organizations.

C.2 AARP FOUNDATION'S EXISTING PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT SYSTEM: As AARP Foundation has focused on outcome-based grant making, it realized it needed to implement specific processes and systems to measure and monitor grantee performance. The first step was to create a data and grant management system with customizable, powerful and user-friendly features. Through our research we identified two programs: Foundation Impact and Foundation Connect. The two systems utilize the Salesforce platform, which allows for individual access on any type of device wherever an internet connection is available. As a result, we provide tremendous flexibility and customization for performance management. Grantees can enter and review data while working in the field and AARP Foundation and the AARP Research Center can do the same from its offices.

AARP Foundation also provides training to its grantees to ensure they are comfortable with the system, which is critically important to maintain high quality data. These systems are already in place and there is flexibility for customization depending in project needs. As mentioned earlier, real-time data can be reviewed regularly to monitor program performance and be able to discuss changes for improvement immediately. In addition, the Salesforce platform provides customized privacy controls to ensure data are only accessed and editable by individuals with proper authority.

The other process we undertook recently was the Outcome Consolidation Project. AARP Foundation completed a comprehensive analysis of all our grantees and programs to determine common outputs and outcomes by program type and our ability to capture the necessary data to measure these outcomes. Our competitive grant making programs provided broad criteria about the outputs and outcomes we sought to fund. Through our review we began to narrow and identify the program types and core outputs and outcomes that AARP Foundation seeks to fund in the future and provide these as a menu of performance measures for prospective grantees to select as applicable to the proposed program. This level of consistency also allows our staff to be more effective in monitoring and improving grantee performance through our Foundation Impact and Foundation

Narratives

Connect systems.

C.3 EXAMPLES OF USING DATA TO INFLUENCE GRANTEES TO IMPROVE PERFORMANCE:

As noted in previous sections, AARP Foundation utilizes its Foundation Impact System (FIS) to access real time data about the status of participants in programs it is supporting. This data is shared with staff and grantees through weekly update meetings. However, AARP Foundation is a firm believer that data means nothing if it is not used for continuous improvement and refinement. An example of the influence we have had in using data to improve program performance is with Arapahoe/Douglas Works -- one of the initial test sites of the WESI model. Since implementing the program and partnering with AARP Foundation, Arapahoe/Douglas Works has completely revamped its programmatic efforts related to older adults services and, as importantly, has begun to track outcomes for older workers coming into their One Stop location. As part of implementing the program, they not only enrolled older adults into the WESI program -- they established new and varied pathways for older adults to access Workforce Investment Act funds that they would have been unable to prior to their partnership with AARP Foundation. Using data to better understand the goals, skills and experience of older adults causes Arapahoe/Douglas Works to realize there was an untapped resource of older workers available to help them meet their outcomes of providing experienced and skills workers to their employer partners. The individual impact of this partnership is also significant. As previously mentioned, because of the partnership with AARP Foundation, Arapahoe/Douglas Works have been able to track information about program participants who have obtained jobs earning them almost \$12,000 more than had they attempted to find a job on their own.

C.4 CAPACITY FOR EVALUATION OF SUBGRANTEE PROGRAM MODELS: AARP's Research Center provides primary as well as secondary research and strategic market analysis of the large and greatly varied 50+ population in the United States. With over 58 staff, including 15 with doctoral degrees, it has the expertise and capacity to oversee successful SIF evaluations and understands when and how to collaborate with external research and evaluation firms to conduct field studies in particular. The Research Center currently brings this experience and knowledge to our grant programs and will continue to provide this level of service to the proposed AARP Foundation/SIF initiative. Due to the nature of the SIF evaluations for this initiative, we anticipate hiring an external evaluation firm to design and conduct the studies. In addition, Joscelyn Silsby, MPH, AARP Foundation's Manager of Monitoring and Evaluation will provide oversight and coordination for all evaluation activities.

D) ABILITY TO PROVIDE PROGRAM SUPPORT AND OVERSIGHT

Narratives

1) The WorkPlace: As discussed earlier, our focus in working with grantees is to establish clear outcomes and then monitor the progress towards the outcomes with specific goals throughout the project. These milestones help us review the status and what steps we may need to take to adjust the program accordingly. In some cases a grantee may be underachieving and we need to analyze and adjust the program to put it back on track. In other cases the grantee may be significantly overachieving and the goals might need to be adjusted upward. The WorkPlace is an example of overachievement. In our first grant to The WorkPlace sought to focus on program replication. When the results demonstrated fidelity, we provided additional funding to expand into five markets. At that time, we believed five markets within one year would be a stretch, but obtainable goal. Through our engagement with The WorkPlace, we both realized The WorkPlace would be able to implement their program in five markets more effectively and efficiently than previously expected. As a result, we discussed changing our goals to increase the total markets to seven by the end of 2013. In addition, we agreed to expansion into the remaining five markets by the first half of 2014. Both the grantee and AARP Foundation were not content to achieve our goals within the allotted 24 months if we could successfully reduce the time and cost by implementing with 18 months.

2) L.A. Kitchen: In addition to The WorkPlace a different type of program support and oversight occurred with L.A. Kitchen. D.C. Central Kitchen, founded by Robert Egger, has been a leader in reducing hunger with recycled good food, training unemployed adults for culinary careers and rebuilding urban food system through social enterprise. When Robert Egger decided to create a similar model in Los Angeles, AARP Foundation became a founding partner on the endeavor with a three-year \$1 million grant. In an entrepreneurial program starting from scratch, it was critical to develop a clear timeline and key milestones in order to keep the project on track, while also supporting the organization to build its capacity and fundraising. Due to the significant investment and high profile launch of this startup project, setting and implementing goals was critical. Part of AARP Foundation's success in working to achieve project goals is the ability to identify grantees that can also maximize the Foundation's technical support. L.A. Kitchen is certainly one of them. AARP Foundation is able to leverage AARP state office in assisting and complementing the work of our grantees. L.A. Kitchen worked closely with the AARP office in California to identify potential partners (funders as well as those that can provide additional start-up support, such as building business connections). Within one year, L.A. Kitchen was able to complete the development of its Board of Directors, identify a new job training and food preparation facility, complete the hiring of its management team (including Development Director and VP of Business Development), while keeping itself under budget.

Narratives

Consistent, but not overwhelming, communication with the organizations helped provide us with information about the program status while minimizing any unnecessary and unpleasant surprises. Our collaborative nature in working with L.A. Kitchen is to maximize our investment in this organization and ensure it succeeds.

D.1 AARP FOUNDATION SUCCESSFUL OPERATION OF SIMILAR PROGRAMS:

For this SIF, AARP Foundation will build on its successful history of operating similar programs, including the Senior Community Service and Employment Program (SCSEP), the Women's Scholarship Program and our past work with grantees in the Income space. AARP Foundation has been managing one of the largest SCSEP programs in the United States for over four decades. SCSEP is more than just an employment program. Rather, AARP Foundation's approach is to provide the necessary training and support for the whole person as well as signing up the individual to benefit programs such as SNAP, health and housing assistance. AARP Foundation SCSEP staff provides the necessary basic skill development and life-skill training to fundamentally change the participant's life and put the individual on a path to stability. Replicating what works, eliminating what doesn't and respecting the individuality and dignity of the participant has made AARP Foundation SCSEP one of the highest performing SCSEP grant recipients, which has resulted in program growth even during periods of budget cuts.

The Women's Scholarship Program that was in place from 2006 to 2011. AARP Foundation recognizes that there is a direct connection between educational opportunities and financial stability for older adults. To facilitate educational attainment, AARP Foundation has implemented a number of interventions in the past aimed at increasing economic stability for older adults. AARP Foundation has awarded over 900 scholarships to women in need. However, the need remains greater than ever and AARP Foundation is committed to taking its research and learnings from past programs and applying them to this new model of service and integration that will ensure that low-income women 50+ have the education, skills, services and opportunities to have a more secure future and avoid the devastating effects of poverty. Based on research and assessment of the scholarship program, we plan to enhance our programmatic efforts in a number of ways that will better support unemployed and underemployed women in their efforts to complete their college degrees or obtain additional and valued certificates/credentials that will lead them to good jobs in growth industries in their communities.

The successful elements of SCSEP, the Women's Scholarship program and our grant making work have been intertwined into WESI and demonstrate our experience operating and overseeing similar

Narratives

programs that have achieved and exceeded their established performance targets.

D.2 AARP FOUNDATION BUILDING SUBGRANTEE CAPACITY

AARP Foundation understands and is fully committed to the SIF requirement of building program sustainability and capacity for subgrantees to implement the WESI program effectively over the long term. For the SIF initiative, AARP Foundation has a 5-step approach for growing subgrantee impact by: 1. Creating networks and building a learning community among subgrantees; 2. Building the internal business case for integrating the WESI program into community college strategic plans during and after SIF funding; 3. Supporting subgrantees to use data effectively for learning, program improvement and decision-making; 4. Assistance with identifying sustained funding at the national, state and local levels; and 5. Promoting the deepening of local partnerships to expand capacity to serve older adults in their communities.

In partnership with AACC, AARP Foundation will play a leadership role in convening the learning community and providing support for the community college network implementing WESI. As part of subgrantee selection, the Foundation has criteria stipulating that WESI be integrated into community college strategic plans and will provide technical assistance as needed. The Foundation has program and evaluation staff in place to help subgrantees use their own data to monitor performance and improve WESI and other programs. Subgrantees will also receive training and technical assistance for specific data collection needs for the evaluations, which will increase subgrantee skills and capacity in this area. From a funding and partnership perspective, community colleges provide numerous advantages to the long term sustainability of WESI and the AARP Foundation/SIF initiative. The existing infrastructure and capacity of these SIF subgrantees (as well as support from AACC) to raise funds from multiple sources, including government, individuals, businesses and foundations allows the community colleges to focus the majority of their effort on the programmatic component. As the SIF Intermediary, AARP Foundation can then provide the plug-in tools and resources for AACC and community college development teams to support their fundraising efforts and increase their capacity.

D.3 AARP FOUNDATION'S COMPLIANCE MONITORING PROCEDURES: As a grant maker since its inception, AARP Foundation has continued to review and apply best practices to monitor grantees for compliance against programmatic requirements. Our goal is to set expectations up front with the grantees even in the application process and review. In addition, AARP Foundation has experience receiving grants from large foundations such as Walmart Foundation and Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, which resulted in subgrants to other organizations. The upfront expectation setting is

Narratives

relevant in these situations as well. We have several protocols for all of our grantees: 1. Clear set of program deliverables and scope of work in the grant agreement; 2. Quarterly programmatic reports; 3. Regularly-scheduled monthly calls with each grantee to provide status updates; 4. Data entry (no less than monthly) into our system; 5. A minimum of one site visit a year by AARP Foundation to review the program in action and interview staff, volunteers, management and program participants.

The Foundation's expectation going into a project is not simply to discuss how it is going, but to focus on the challenges and create a learning environment for program improvement. The Foundation is investing in these programs and organizations because it believes it is one of the best ways to secure economic opportunity for low-income 50+. As result, the Foundation is engaged in a collaborative way with the grantees to ensure the programs are successful. The checks and balances between reviewing the actual metrics and data with the in-person check-ins, provides insights to the ability of the grantees to meet and exceed programmatic goals. We have found these procedures to be extremely effective and will utilize them, along with input from CNCS, to monitor the work of the community colleges (subgrantees).

D.4 ACCOUNTABILITY FOR PROGRAM GOALS: AARP Foundation, like the Social Innovation Fund, believes in measurement and accountability. If a program is not demonstrating an ability to provide meaningful outcomes, then the program will no longer be funded. As a result, staff and grantees are constantly analyzing and evaluating their programs to determine the program's efficacy. Again, establishing expectations from the beginning is critical to ensure all parties are holding themselves accountable. While we establish these expectations before any grant agreement is finalized, we also reiterate them during our on-boarding call. Each on-boarding call provides an opportunity for all constituents -- essentially anyone who has any involvement with the project -- to review the grant agreement from top to bottom, including the basic terms and conditions, the scope of work, logic model and budget. AARP Foundation has found that many of the grantee's program staff never view or never receive the final copy of the agreement. Therefore, the on-boarding call provides an opportunity to once again level the playing field in terms of the project knowledge and expectations. AARP Foundation understands that no project will be executed exactly as how it was planned and this is reiterated that with the grantees. As a result, AARP Foundation seeks to provide flexibility in order to achieve program goals. This is where the data reporting, monthly calls and quarterly reports provide us with an opportunity to interact with the subgrantee to review project status and decide if we need to change course or reallocate resources. But implementation and results are two different things. While we may be flexible with our implementation, the Foundation is rigid in

Narratives

holding the grantees accountable to achieve program outcomes and goals. Every project has a key project timeline (we use Microsoft Project to assist in managing the project timeline with the grantee) and key milestones. Reassessment when reviewing the project and reaching the milestones provides the opportunity for the project to pivot, when necessary, in order to reach its goal -- not just programmatic goals but capacity and fundraising goals as well. The same framework is one that we also use with CNCS. We are very encouraged about CNCS's level of engagement with the grantees and believe their expertise and experience will be a tremendous asset to achieving the program goals.

In addition to holding the subgrantees accountable, AARP Foundation has in place a variety of processes and structures that monitor our current programs. Each department provides monthly reports to AARP Foundation's board of directors that provide status updates on its goals. Each program undergoes an "after action report" that is presented to the Foundation's senior leadership team for review and discussion. AARP Foundation utilizes a dashboard, updated monthly, to review our status on financial, operational and programmatic goals. In addition, the Foundation's senior leadership team takes an active role in reviewing the dashboard and providing the necessary support to ensure we are holding ourselves accountable for our program goals.

D.5 STAFF CAPACITY TO IMPLEMENT THE PROPOSED AARP/SIF INITIATIVE:

LISA MARSH RYERSON, PRESIDENT: Prior to AARP Foundation, Ms. Ryerson served as President of Wells College in Aurora, New York from 1995-2013. Ms. Ryerson led the transition of Wells College to becoming a co-ed institution. During this period, Wells was so successfully repositioned in the marketplace that enrollment increased 45% in just six years. She served as Chair of Aurora Inn, Inc., the college's for-profit enterprise whose holdings include the four diamond Aurora Inn and E.B. Morgan House. Ms. Ryerson led the launch of an endowed Center for Business and Entrepreneurship and raised \$17 million to build a state of the art science education facility. In recognition of the outstanding leadership she provided during her 18-year tenure as President, the Wells College Board of Trustees recently named Ms. Ryerson President Emerita.

PATRICIA D. SHANNON, MBA - CFO AND SVP OF STRATEGIC PLANNING: Ms. Shannon leads Foundation efforts to align resources with outcomes that provide the greatest impact for the low-income 50+. Prior to joining AARP Foundation she was the Vice President, Finance & Administration for CEDPA, an international non-profit focusing on women's rights, education and health issues. She was also the Director of Internal Audit at CARE (the world's largest international development and relief organization) where she successfully established and developed the internal audit function serving headquarters and over 40 country offices throughout the developing world.

Narratives

COREY HASTINGS, DIRECTOR OF FINANCE: Mr. Hastings has over 13 years professional experience, with nine of those in the nonprofit sector. He has extensive experience managing federal grant awards, including proposal development, contract negotiation and financial control for federal grants and contracts with an NIH and USAID implementer respectively. He has completed extensive training in federal grant compliance, project management in a government context and federal human resources management. He has an MBA from the Mason School of Business at William & Mary and is a Virginia licensed CPA.

EMILY ALLEN, VICE PRESIDENT, INCOME IMPACT AREA: Ms. Allen has served in a number of capacities in the non-profit, education and workforce development arenas and has worked across multiple generations to ensure vulnerable and at risk individuals have access to the resources and services they need to thrive. Beginning her career as a Special Education teacher and school administrator, Ms. Allen later accepted positions with AARP and AARP Foundation including as a Project Director, Area Manager and Assistant National Director for SCSEP. With AARP Foundation, Ms. Allen also served as Director, Workforce Programs and was named Vice President for the Foundation in 2011. Ms. Allen holds a Bachelor's Degree in Psychology from Westminster College and a Master's Degree in Human and Organizational Learning from The George Washington University.

LORI STRAUSS, PROGRAM MANAGER, INCOME IMPACT AREA: Ms. Strauss is the program manager for BACK TO WORK 50+ and has 10 years of experience designing products and programs for vulnerable 50+ individuals at AARP Foundation. She designed and launched Benefits QuickLink in partnership with the National Council on Aging. This national website helps over 20,000 people a year determine their potential eligibility for public benefits and access the application forms. She also designed Prepare to Care- a program guide that is now used in African American churches to support caregivers. In 2011, she wrote the business plan for BACK TO WORK 50+, which led the development of the program which served 2000 job candidates in its first year. This year she is managing the expansion from 3 to 20 locations and the continued development of the Foundation Impact System and new Call Center. Prior to joining the AARP Foundation, Ms. Strauss as an AmeriCorps program officer at the Corporation for National and Community Service. She earned her bachelor's degree in sociology at Northland College and her master's degree at Colorado State University.

MARC MCDONALD, DIRECTOR OF GRANTS MANAGEMENT: Mr. McDonald oversees the application, award, assessment and accountability of all AARP Foundation grants and provides guidance on the Foundation's strategic grant making. Focusing on a streamlined approach towards outcomes-based grant making, Mr. McDonald has developed new processes and workflows to align

Narratives

AARP Foundation's grant making with its mission and 3-year strategic plan, with a sharp focus on improving performance management and evaluation. He also ensures timely reporting and compliance for nearly \$80 million in government grants received by AARP Foundation. Mr. McDonald was elected to the board of the Grants Managers Network (the largest grant management professional association) in 2014 where he serves on the audit committee. Prior to joining AARP Foundation, he was Director of Grant Policy and System Analysis for the Corporation for Public Broadcasting. He oversaw distribution policy, compliance and grantee reporting for a \$300 million Community Service grant program serving nearly 600 public radio and television grantees. Ms. McDonald earned his BA from Dartmouth College and his MBA from the University of Chicago Booth School of Business.

JOSCELYN SILSBY, MANAGER OF MONITORING AND EVALUATION: Ms. Silsby is responsible for the development and implementation of performance management and program evaluation in AARP Foundation's four impact areas--hunger, housing, income and isolation. She also leads the development and execution of the Foundation's policy guidance around evaluation at multiple levels in the organization. Prior to coming to AARP, Ms. Silsby was a Research and Evaluation Specialist at the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS), where she had a principle role in strategic plan and performance measurement development and was a key member of the team that created and implemented evaluation policy and guidance for the Social Innovation Fund (SIF) during its first three grant cycles (2010-2012). She also has worked in academic settings as an applied researcher designing surveys, conducting interviews and leading focus-group discussions to assess attitudes and behaviors of medically underserved populations. Ms. Silsby earned a Bachelor's degree in Psychology at the University of California, Los Angeles and a Masters of Public Health degree at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill.

ALICIA WILLIAMS SENIOR RESEARCH ADVISOR, AARP'S RESEARCH CENTER: Dr. Williams will provide technical support to the SIF evaluation process. Dr. Williams has more than fifteen years of experience leading quantitative and qualitative research projects. In her present position as a, she manages research, evaluation and consulting efforts in a variety of issue areas, including retirement, economic security, volunteerism, civic engagement and organizational performance. Dr. Williams consults with senior managers and other AARP stakeholders on the conceptualization, design and implementation of actionable research related to AARP's strategic issues and priorities. She has been a research manager for the Back-to-Work 50+ program since its launch in September 2013 and has managed several research projects aimed at better understanding the

Narratives

experiences of program participants. Dr. Williams holds a Master's degree and a Doctorate in Psychology from Howard University.

CANDACE SLEDGE, PROGRAM ANALYST, GRANTS MANAGEMENT: Ms. Sledge is responsible for the day-to-day operations of grants management projects, reports and budgets. She manages the execution of grant agreements, collecting and processing quarterly reports and scheduling and processing payments. Ms. Sledge served as the lead on the Foundations disaster relief grants; working closely with AARP's State and National Group and AARP state offices and also oversees the grantee report, tracking progress and changes made to agreements, updating it as necessary.

SUSAN CAICEDO, PROGRAM ANALYST, INCOME IMPACT AREA: Ms. Caicedo's responsibilities include program development, project management, volunteer recruitment and management, data management, operational support, research, program metrics tracking, budget oversight, event planning and monitoring of key projects. As the Administrative Associate for the AARP Foundation Women's Programs Department, she supported the Women's Scholarship Program, Women's Financial Literacy Project, Benefits Access and Outreach Program and the SVP of Programs.

E) ABILITY TO PROVIDE FINANCIAL SUPPORT AND OVERSIGHT

AARP Foundation has been a recipient of government funding for several decades. Currently, the Foundation receives over \$73 million dollars from the IRS, Department of Labor and USDA for our Tax-Aide, SCSEP and SNAP outreach programs. As a result, we have experience managing to specific budgets, coding expenses properly and being able to report in detail how Federal funds and matching funds are being spent. The target subgrantee population is community colleges. Much like AARP Foundation, they are receiving funds from multiple sources which include, on average, nearly 30% from the federal government. As a result, these institutions also have the system in place the properly track and report expenses to different sources of revenue. In addition, our process of regularly scheduled engagement with grantees also includes financial and budget discussion. While the Foundation forward funds its grantees, it creates a payment schedule based upon a quarterly project cash flow schedule that is submitted during the application stage. This helps the Foundation align payments with anticipated expenditures. The grantee has funding upfront for project implementation, but it still needs to demonstrate it has expensed the majority of the funds before receiving a second payment. At the same time, if the spend rate is occurring at a much higher rate than the project forecast, the grantee provides us with an opportunity to review and discuss options to ensure sustainability (whether reallocated budgetary resources or seeking new revenue).

Narratives

E.1 EXPERIENCED STAFF TO OVERSEE FINANCIAL COMPLIANCE: Staff directly involved with the project have decades of experience managing federal and private grants and overseeing grantee compliance (including subgrantee compliance). In addition, to our individual staff, AARP Foundation is able to utilize AARP's internal audit and compliance services team. This team has already provided our grants management department with tools to review grantee compliance and we will be able to leverage their expertise for this project.

E.2 AARP FOUNDATION FEDERAL GUIDELINES EXPERIENCE: With decades of experience managing tens of millions of Federal dollars annually, AARP Foundation has well-established systems and processes in place to comply with Federal guidelines and requirements. We undergo the necessary audits (A-133) required as a Federal grant recipient and continue to meet their guidelines. Again, because the subgrantees are community colleges that already receive federal funding, they too have in place the necessary systems to demonstrate compliance. In addition, we will undertake due diligence with each applicant to determine if it has ever been out of compliance with federal guidelines. This due diligence would include a review of their A-133 audit and financial statements as well as a review their current processes. We have set forth the necessary controls and processes to ensure our ongoing ability to meet Federal guidelines, which has been reviewed and approved by internal and external auditors. Part of our on-boarding process will include a review of:

- * Terms and conditions of the subgrantee agreement
- * Relevant OMB circulars
- * SIF regulations and requirements
- * Relevant parts of the Serve America Act legislation

E.3 AARP FOUNDATION'S CAPACITY FOR FUNDRAISING: There are few organizations that have the capacity and diverse portfolio of funding sources comparable to AARP Foundation. In addition to the aforementioned federal grant programs, AARP Foundation has multiyear commitments from a wide range of corporations and corporate foundations. In addition, AARP Foundation currently has more the 2 million individual donors who support AARP Foundation's Impact Areas and programs at the national and local levels. AARP Foundation has established itself as the nonprofit providing solutions to move low-income older adults from vulnerability to stability. Our next step is furthering developing the evidence of our programs to generate interest and support from large funders. We have experience in securing significant funding from organizations such as Toyota, Walmart Foundation, UnitedHealthcare and Robert Wood Johnson Foundation to support our programs.

Narratives

F) STRATEGY FOR SUSTAINABILITY

AARP Foundation is committed to WESI because of its potential to increase the financial security of low-income older women, especially those between the ages of 50 and 59. With no other funder dedicated to improving the economic stability of this population, WESI will continue to be a priority for AARP Foundation. In 2011, the Foundation committed itself to developing and implementing solutions to hunger, income, housing and isolation, all of which continue to plague economically disadvantaged people 50+. We developed a three-year, intervention-centric strategic plan to identify and begin to scale the most impactful programs and services. Over this timeframe, we have invested significant resources in multiple iterations of the WESI model, now a core intervention in the Foundation's "Income Impact Area." Whether or not we receive SIF funding, we are pilot-testing WESI with community colleges this year, and building the requisite blueprints to help community colleges implement a program we know a fair amount about based on previous work with a Workforce Investment Board in Colorado and with the Goodwill in Arizona. What we don't have is a strong implementation study to complete the program design and ready it for an impact evaluation that shows us whether and how the program works over the long-term. Once we have accomplished this, we believe AARP Foundation and our grantees (community colleges and possibly other organizations) will be well-positioned to support broad scaling and replication in low-income communities nationwide.

Working with CNCS to implement the SIF's approach to grant making and evaluation, is an unprecedented opportunity for AARP Foundation to undertake a true "impact" evaluation, stabilize WESI to ensure fidelity and replicate it through AACC's community college system. Community colleges provide numerous advantages to the long term sustainability of WESI and the AARP Foundation/SIF initiative. One of the most important advantages is the existing infrastructure for fundraising already in place. These are organizations that have the capacity and the ability to raise significant funds each year to support their activities. Part of the collaboration with AACC is to develop and support a plan for sustainability on the local level. What makes the WESI attractive locally is that it helps identify the critical workforce needs in a community and will offer an evidence-based program model that will solve for those workforce needs. With fewer unemployed people as a result of this program (WESI), local funders from across the funding spectrum will seek to sustain it. AACC will provide SIF community colleges with the necessary sustainability plan to meet these local funding needs and work with each community college to help execute it. For example, AACC is committed to helping with messaging to potential funders, convening all local constituents so that everyone

Narratives

understands the needs for the program and is willing to fund its growth. This local-national revenue model will help not only achieve sustainability for the program but also assist with its expansion. The AARP Foundation/SIF initiative and what we learn from it will be shared broadly through our internal and external communication channels, enhancing the reputation of the program, attracting donors and additional organizations seeking to implement it.

Budget/Cost Effectiveness

A) BUDGET JUSTIFICATION

AARP Foundation proposes a \$2 million budget for Year 1 of the SIF. The funding consists of \$1,000,000 from the Social Innovation Fund, matched by \$1,000,000 of unrestricted funds currently available from AARP Foundation. The CNCS share will include all subgrants and most of the evaluation expenses. AARP Foundation's share will cover all other costs.

PERSONNEL

Total personnel expenses are \$229,500 and are allocated among seven individuals, which are listed below.

1) Marc McDonald, Director of Grants Management -- Marc will be the project director and oversee the subgrantee selection process in collaboration with the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS). He will work closely with the program and evaluation team leads to ensure consistent tracking and assessment of subgrantee performance. He will also be responsible for AARP Foundation and subgrantee contractual and financial compliance. He will allocate 50% of his time on the project.

2) Emily Allen, Vice President, Income Impact Area -- Emily is a member of the AARP Foundation's Leadership Team and will provide strategic oversight of the project as well as coordination across the AARP enterprise, where appropriate, to include involvement and leverage support from AARP state offices, Multicultural Markets and Engagement and the Integrated Communications department. She will allocate 10% of her time to the project.

3) Lori Strauss, Program Manager, Income Impact Area -- Lori will be the program lead for the WESI, providing leadership and technical support to the subgrantees and monitoring their performance. Through regular contact with the subgrantees, she will assess individual and group needs for specific types of technical assistance that contribute to strengthening WESI's program model. She will also be the primary point of contact and lead in coordinating AARP Foundation's relationship with the American Association for Community Colleges, and CNCS. She will allocate 50% of her time on the project.

Narratives

4) Joscelyn Silsby, Manager, Monitoring and Evaluation -- Joscelyn will provide evaluation planning and oversight for the proposed WESI program. She will ensure standard performance measures are in place to track WESI outcomes, and that subgrantees have the technical support and tools needed to integrate data collection procedures into program operations. She will work closely with the AARP Research Center to oversee the work of the independent evaluator and facilitate communication and coordination with SIF subgrantees and CNCS. She will allocate 50% of her time on the project.

5) Alicia Williams, Senior Advisor, AARP Research Center -- Alicia Williams will be the primary staff member from the AARP Research Center supporting the research and evaluation needs of the SIF initiative. In collaboration with the SIF team, she will develop the RFP for selecting an independent evaluator to develop a unified Subgrantee Evaluation Plan (SEP). She will also work closely with Joscelyn to review the SEP prior to submission to CNCS and provide other research support tasks as needed. She will allocate 10% of her time on the project.

6) Susan Caicedo, Program Analyst, Income Impact Area -- Susan will provide administrative support to the project including coordination of web site development and technical assistance for the Foundation Impact System for all parties interfacing with that platform. She will allocate 15% of her time on the project.

7) Candace Sledge, Program Analyst, Grants Management -- Candace will provide administrative support for grant management activities including technical assistance for the Foundation Connect system for all parties interfacing with that platform. She will allocate 15% of her time on the project.

FRINGE BENEFITS

The total fringe benefit cost is \$75,735. It is broken into the following categories:

- Employee fringe benefits (e.g., health and life insurance): 12.53%
- Retirement (401K employer matching): 3.90%
- Payroll taxes: 1.45%
- FICA expense: 6.20%
- Incentives (based upon ability for project to meet goals in a cost-effective way): 8.00%
- Fringe for incentives: 0.92%

TRAVEL

Subgrantee site visits: We will make a site visit prior to award for due diligence (capacity, partnerships, outreach, evaluation plan, compliance procedures in place) and a site visit during the award. Each site visit will consist of three people from AARP Foundation (Marc McDonald, Lori

Narratives

Strauss and Joscelyn Silsby). The site visit during the project year will review execution of the WESI program model including subgrantee compliance, project status, evaluation implementation and any needs for technical assistance and capacity building. AARP Foundation calculates the average site visit will consist of airfare (\$500), hotel for two nights (\$325), food (\$75 per day for three days), transportation (\$100) and incidentals (\$50). The average cost is \$1200 per person.

Subgrantee convening: AARP Foundation believes gathering the subgrantees is an extremely effective way to establish and review expectations, compliance standards and evaluation requirements. The first convening will take place over two days at AARP Foundation in Washington, DC. It will focus .The second convening will also take place at AARP Foundation and will be roughly six to seven months into the subgrant period to review initial implementation, sustainability, evaluation and share learning. The second convening will be a day and a half event requiring two overnight stays (\$650) plus meals (\$150), transportation (\$100), airfare (\$550) and incidentals (\$50) totaling \$1500 per person. The convening would cover the cost of two individuals representing each subgrantee.

SUPPLIES

At each convening, we will provide each individual from the grantee with a binder and USB drive of relevant information related to the discussions. We estimate \$787 for supplies costs.

CONTRACTUAL AND CONSULTANT SERVICES

Consultant -- Grantee Capacity Building: As we have discussed in the application, we will contract with the American Association of Community Colleges to be the primary organization to provide capacity building and organizational support to subgrantees. We anticipate costs for this contract will be around \$250,000 to provide project support, additional project management, subgrantee selection assistance, marketing and outreach and fundraising assistance as well as leveraging AACC's virtual career network. We anticipate six staff (four programmatic -- program director, senior vice president, project coordinator and administrative support; two technology -- developer and project director). The blended rate for the staff is \$98/hour. The total number of hours for the programmatic team is 1,025 and 290 for the technology team. Total staff costs will be \$128,870. In addition, two programmatic staff will visit the five subgrantees six times over the course of the first year (including pre-award visit and on-going technical assistance). Each trip will cost roughly \$1200 per person (airfare (\$500), hotel for two nights (\$325), food (\$75 per day for three days), transportation (\$100) and incidentals (\$50)) totaling \$72,000. In addition, there are technical hardware costs related to upgrades and maintenance of the virtual career network, which total \$40,000. Finally, AACC anticipates \$9130 in supplies and

Narratives

other costs.

Performance Management System: The initial capital expenses of the Foundation Impact and Foundation Connect systems have been made by AARP Foundation. However, there are ongoing maintenance and enhancements costs related to the hiring of a consultant to oversee the systems. We anticipate those costs for Year 1 will be \$29,304. We anticipate two consultants at \$120/hour blended rate totaling 230 hours plus \$1704 in supplies and other costs.

Website Development: AARP Foundation believes in transparency and the sharing of our data and learning. Our plan is to create an external website to promote the Social Innovation Fund and our subgrantees and report the progress of our work with the broader SIF community. In addition, the website will include an internal password protected component to allow AARP Foundation and subgrantees to share information and documents, manage the project and provide for direct communication at any time among subgrantees and AARP Foundation. We anticipate the cost will be \$82,000. This is based upon three consultants with a blended rate of \$155 totaling 520 hours plus \$1400 in supplies and other costs.

Software Licenses: In order to allow internal and external users to access the Foundation Impact and Foundation Connect systems, we must pay annual software licenses, which cost around \$7,000 per year. These costs include \$2400 for customer community licenses (which allows community colleges to access the two systems up to 2000 log-ins/month); \$1800 for administrator licenses to Salesforce for AARP Foundation staff (\$360/year for five staff); and \$2800 for Foundation Connect licenses for AARP foundation staff (\$560/year for five staff).

OTHER COSTS

TRAINING: AARP Foundation's customer service representatives handle the inquiries from interested individuals looking to become participants in the program and check for services the participants may qualify for, such as SNAP benefits. The estimated cost for customer service representative training is \$15,000, which breaks down as follows. The trainer's day rate is \$800/day. We anticipate in total three days of training, which equals \$2400 for the trainer. There are currently 10 people in the call center with an hourly rate of \$28. We expect training will consist of 45 hours in total per person (this includes time with trainer and follow-up exercises). Total for customer representatives is \$12,600. Given the emphasis on evaluation for the SIF, AARP Foundation program staff will need training to increase their evaluation knowledge and expertise. We have budgeted \$10,000 for training, which includes:

-Ten (10) AARP Foundation leadership and program staff to attend a three-hour evaluation training

Narratives

conducted by an external consultant on site at AARP Foundation. The consultant rate for the training (including preparation) is a flat rate of \$3000 (roughly 10 hours of preparation, three hours of training and two hours of post-training follow up at \$200/hour).

-Four (4) program staff working directly on the WESI/SIF initiative will each participate in a two-day evaluation training conducted by The Evaluator's Institute at George Washington University in Washington, D.C. These workshops are approximately \$1000 each, so \$4,000 is budgeted to cover this cost.

-Two AARP staff conducting research and evaluation activities for the WESI/SIF initiative will attend a professional development conference such as the American Evaluation Association conference to potentially present about the SIF initiative and receive additional training opportunities. \$3,000 is budgeted to cover conference fees (\$450 per person) and travel costs for two staff (\$1050 per person).

EVALUATION: Through an open and competitive RFP process, AARP Foundation (in consultation with CNCS) will select an independent, third-party evaluator to conduct implementation evaluations at the five subgrantee sites (Community Colleges) in program Years 1 and 2 and develop a quasi-experimental evaluation design with data collection to begin in program Year 3. The \$242,500 represents the costs for the first year of the SIF, which ends in September 2015, even though the implementation evaluation for the first year of the WESI program will continue through March 2016. The CNCS share will be \$200,000 and AARP Foundation will cover the remaining \$42,500. As we have not selected an evaluator yet, the costs that follows are estimates. We anticipate an average hourly rate of \$150 with a total of 1280 hours (consisting of three consultants) at a total of \$192,000. We anticipate travel costs of \$48,000 (two consultants with an average travel cost of \$1200 per site and four trips per each of five sites). In addition, we anticipate \$2500 for supplies.

The selected evaluation firm will work with AARP Foundation and CNCS to develop a unified Subgrantee Evaluation Plan (SEP) that describes how the WESI intervention will be evaluated to maximize the potential of moving from a preliminary level of evidence to a moderate level of evidence within three years. Specifically in Year 1 the evaluator will determine: (1) which components of the WESI program can be evaluated for impact; (2) sampling strategies and how to select a comparison group(s) with a set of characteristics that reasonably match those of the WESI program being implemented; (3) the data collection plan and how it connects to the WESI "cycle" and overall program operations; (4) the timing of evaluation activities over 3-5 years and; (5) the data analysis plan. The evaluation firm will also work with AARP Foundation and Community College (subgrantee) staff to provide evaluation training needed to support accuracy in data collection,

Narratives

understanding of the results and practical application of results to refine the WESI program model.

CRIMINAL HISTORY BACKGROUND CHECK: We estimate 10 staff from AARP Foundation will undergo the criminal history background checks and 40 more from the subgrantees (approximately eight per each of five subgrantees). We estimate \$60 per background check for 50 individuals in total will cost \$3000.

SUBGRANTS: We anticipate five subgrantees each will receive, on average, an \$185,000 grant, which totals to \$925,000. CNCS share of subgrants will be \$800,000 and AARP Foundation's share will be \$125,000.

INDIRECT COST RATE: AARP Foundation's federally approved indirect cost rate is 5.65% with a total project indirect cost of \$64,174. The indirect rate is calculated by applying the rate to the first \$25,000 of each of the anticipated five subgrants (totaling \$125,000) and the remaining direct expenses.

B) DESCRIPTION OF MATCH SOURCES AND CAPACITY

AARP Foundation is the current recipient of a \$2.3 million two-year grant from the Walmart Foundation to expand our Back to Work 50+ in 12 markets (received in 2012). Based on recent dialogue with the Walmart Foundation, we are optimistic that we will receive renewed funding from them in 2015 for this effort, which will also help us satisfy the matching requirements for the SIF opportunity. Additionally, AARP Foundation is committed to leveraging SIF funding to raise the profile of the Back to Work 50+ program among partners and prospective funders. Funding from CNCS via the SIF program for Back to Work 50+ will help open the door with many established funders that work in the Economic Opportunity space but would be new funding sources for AARP Foundation. Funders we will target for the AARP Foundation portion of the match will likely include Ford Foundation, Kresge Foundation, Joyce Foundation, Microsoft, Robin Hood Foundation and the Surdna Foundation. While we are fully committed to leveraging SIF funding to generate new funding for Back to Work 50+, AARP Foundation is at the same fully prepared to meet the matching requirements with our own unrestricted cash as shown by the supplied matching letter signed by AARP Foundation's CFO Patricia D. Shannon.

Based on existing funding (internal and external) as well as the new opportunities SIF will help create for AARP Foundation, we have a high level of confidence we will be able to meet the intermediary matching requirements. AARP Foundation will look proactively for opportunities to write sub awardees into national funding requests to existing and new funders and existing funders (ex:

Narratives

Walmart Foundation). As the primary partner of AARP Foundation's Back to Work 50+ program, we are working closely with the AACC to help provide support to our current portfolio of sub awardees to raise additional resources for this work from local funding sources. Beyond their ability to provide solid results on a programmatic level, one of the great benefits of working with community colleges is that they have strong fundraising capacity and have proven quite able to leverage our past funding to bring on new sources of funding for the AARP Foundation/SIF initiative and they have capacity and commitment to make the program sustainable beyond life of grant

Finally, we will help bring attention to the AARP Foundation/SIF initiative and our sub-grantees by leveraging the AARP brand. As AARP's affiliated charity, AARP Foundation has access to the full suite of AARP resources. AARP produces AARP The Magazine, the definitive voice for Americans 50+ and the world's largest-circulation magazine; AARP Bulletin, the go-to news source for the 50+ audience; www.aarp.org; AARP VIVA, a bilingual lifestyle multimedia platform addressing the interests and needs of Hispanic Americans; and national television and radio programming. These assets reach an audience in the tens of millions and thus can help bring significant attention to the AARP Foundation/SIF initiative and our sub-awardees, which have the potential to open new doors for funding.

REFERENCES

- (1) Rand, A. Barry. "Middle Class Under Attack: Retirement Security in Doubt for Middle Class. January, 2015. <http://states.aarp.org/aarp-retirement-security-in-doubt-for-middle-class-3/>.
- (2) Finances 50+ Program Evaluation. AARP Research Center. December, 2013.
- (3) Huffington Post. Grandparents Raising Grandchildren: Study Finds Child Care Assistance Growing. <http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/09/09>.
- (4) Employee Benefit Research Institute, "Labor-force Participation Rates of the Population Age 55 and Older, 2011: After the Economic Downturn," February 2012.
- (5) Bissell and O'Connor. AARP Foundation Site Findings. July, 2012.
- (6) Women and the Workforce: Challenges and Opportunities Facing Women as They Age. OWL. 2012. Retrieved: http://www.owl-national.org/Files/Women_and_the_Workforce.
- (7) Harry J. Holzer. Workforce development as an antipoverty strategy: What do we know? What should we do? <http://www.irp.wisc.edu/publications/focus/pdfs/foc262k.pdf>.
- (8) Martinson, K. Innovative Employment Approaches and Programs for Low-Income Families. Urban Institute. 2010.
- (9) Heidkamp, M. (2009), "Older and Out of Work: Trends in Older Worker Displacement," Rutgers

Narratives

University_5_14_09_Heidkamp.pdf, May 14, 2009.

(10) Gale, William G. and Levine, Ruth, "Financial Literacy: What Works? How Could It Be More Effective?" Brookings Institution, October 2010.

(11) Framing New Terrain: Older Adults and Higher Education. The American Council on Education.

(12) Framing New Terrain: Older Adults and Higher Education. The American Council on Education

Clarification Summary

Programmatic Issues for Clarification

1. How many organizations are you currently supporting to implement the WESI intervention?

We are currently supporting eleven (11) community colleges in implementing the WESI intervention and will on-board another four (4) colleges in July at an orientation hosted by one of the colleges that began implementing the program in January. This phased approach will allow for the colleges currently implementing the program to help mentor and guide the new colleges and shorten start-up time.

2. How many community colleges do you anticipate having the capacity to meet the criteria of your subgrantee selection process?

From our experience in selecting subgrantees to date, we have determined that about 75% of colleges that have submitted applications have or can reasonably build the requisite capacity to implement the project and test the model against established goals and objectives. To select the fifteen (15) colleges to participate in this year's expansion of the WESI model, we reached out to thirty (30) colleges within a targeted geographic region. Of that number, twenty-one (21) submitted applications and through our review process, it was determined that sixteen (16) of those colleges had the requisite capability to implement the program. Following the selection process, one of the colleges was eliminated reducing the final number of colleges implementing to fifteen (15). Please see the response to question 3 for further detail.

To date, we have utilized a targeted approach in our outreach to colleges based on knowledge and expertise of AACC regarding those colleges likely to have the capacity to implement WESI. In addition, we have targeted certain geographic regions. As we expand the universe of potential

Narratives

subgrantees, we anticipate that the ratio of potential applicants to qualified colleges with the requisite capacity to both implement the program and participate in a rigorous evaluation of it will go down significantly (closer to 50% or below). In the five states targeted for the SIF, we will conduct outreach to approximately 58 colleges and anticipate, based on initial research, track record, and additional subgrantee requirements for SIF that approximately 24 will be interested and eligible to participate. From this pool of eligible community colleges, we will select the five (5) subgrantees most committed to implementing WESI, and who have sufficient staffing, expertise and infrastructure in place to facilitate data collection and evaluation.

3. We would like to further understand the subgrantee selection criteria you outlined in your proposal. What type of support are you looking for from a community college's President and how would they demonstrate that support in their subgrantee application?

Support from the highest level of our community college partners is critical to the long-term success of the intervention. Our approach is focused from the start on making the WESI model a key, strategic initiative for the colleges that both helps us meet our goals as well as helps the colleges achieve their strategic agenda. We believe it is those two elements that will ultimately make this a sustainable and scalable model.

Absent this level of support, the project can quickly get derailed if there is a disconnect between the department setting the strategic plan for the college and those carrying out the project as was the case for one of the colleges selected to be part of the expansion efforts in January, 2014. While their application was excellent and they seemingly had the requisite capacity and capability -- there was a lack of communication between the department that applied for the grant and the senior leadership, which did not surface until it was time to negotiate the grant agreement. Ultimately we decided that the time was not right for them to participate in the project and we did not provide a grant to the college.

Having learned from this experience, we now ensure through the RFP process that there is alignment with the senior leadership of the college, the President has identified the department within the college that will be tasked with implementing the program, and we have verification of senior leadership support via the proposal and the negotiated grant agreement.

Narratives

4. Your proposal identifies subgrantee evaluation and data collection as potential technical assistance needs. What other technical assistance needs do you anticipate your subgrantees having?

AARP Foundation has invested significant time and resources into developing an internal business model to change fundamentally the way in which we deliver technical assistance to our partners and grantees. Through our experience, we have discovered that while community colleges have significant expertise in facilitating entry into job skills training for students, there are varying degrees of capability and capacity to integrate other critical elements of the WESI model. Therefore, we work closely with our grantees to assess individual needs while ensuring standards, quality and performance against program goals. To that end, AARP Foundation provides technical assistance in the following areas:

- a. Research and information about older adults to increase intergenerational competencies and build the value of the 50+ workforce on the part of potential employers, community college staff, and the broader community.
- b. Marketing and communication assistance, which includes targeted media and grassroots marketing strategies to help grantees develop effective communication plans, collateral and messaging that reaches low-income older adult women and builds awareness of the program in local communities.
 - Coaching services for clients. This is a specific area in which we have invested a great deal of technical assistance to create effective coaching experiences, which include assessment of client interests, skills, and barriers;
 - Job search coaching to tailor resume and update networking strategies;
 - Assistance navigating the application and enrollment process for short-term training programs that lead to specific in-demand jobs;
 - Job application leads and interview practice;
 - Linking job candidates to supportive services (food, housing, transportation, mental health, etc.);and
 - Accessing computer and technology training, as needed.
- c. Financial capability workshops and training on AARP Foundation's Finances 50+ program.
- d. The AARP Foundation Impact System to track client information and outcomes.
- e. Data and trend analysis to improve performance.
- f. The customized Virtual Career Network (VCN) to facilitate client services.

Narratives

5. What type of technical assistance will AACC provide?

AACC will provide three levels of technical assistance to the project. First, they will provide expertise to AARP Foundation staff to facilitate better understanding of the community college system, motivators, challenges and opportunities for using the system as a platform for implementing and scaling the WESI model. As part of this technical assistance, AACC will provide guidance to AARP Foundation on customizing the Virtual Career Network to support the goals of the project and participating colleges.

Second, during the RFP phases of the expansion, AACC will provide guidance and insight to AARP Foundation staff on colleges within the geographic targets that potentially have the requisite capacity and capability to implement the program. With that information in mind, AARP Foundation will conduct outreach with those colleges and provide them with the RFP. AACC will not participate in the review of the proposals submitted by the colleges nor the actual selection process.

Finally, AACC will provide project management assistance to AARP Foundation staff and the local colleges participating in the project to help ensure that the project stays on track, that risks to the project are identified and mitigated, and that colleges are effectively and efficiently using the systems available to them (i.e., the Foundation Impact System, the Virtual Career Network, etc.)

6. Your application discussed how you supported the growth and expansion of The WorkPlace Platform to Employment Program through funding and relationship building. However, your application lacked specificity on how you managed and supported them towards their growth goals in other ways. Please provide additional information on how you supported program growth and expansion via technical assistance, capacity building, etc.

In January, 2012, AARP Foundation provided a grant to The WorkPlace to implement an "older worker" cohort as part of their existing Platform to Employment program in Bridgeport, Connecticut. As part of that initial grant, we supported the implementation and ultimate growth and expansion by first helping them develop a logic model for the program. While the Platform to Employment program was already in place, establishing a logic model helped set the stage for expanding the

Narratives

program by clearly articulating to funders, potential expansion partners, and employers the outputs and activities and how those tied to outcomes and impact intended for the program.

Through our efforts during that first year of funding, we were also able to help The WorkPlace build capacity to look beyond their current program model and integrate access to other support services (such as food assistance) for program participants to the point where The WorkPlace established a food pantry within their offices to facilitate access to short term support for the long term unemployed.

In addition, the approach of the Platform to Employment model was somewhat "one size fits all." As part of our role as funder, we were able to provide to The WorkPlace staff technical assistance on growing generational competencies and how to communicate with and serve diverse audiences within the existing program structure. As we supported the expansion of the program to additional communities beginning in 2013, we began to realize that the business model of providing financial support to fund cohorts was not contributing to the sustainability of programmatic efforts. In fact, we were getting feedback from the Workforce Investment Boards (WIBs), who were partnering with The WorkPlace to implement the program, that while they believed the program was successful, the model was more "one cohort and done." Based on this feedback, we provided guidance and assistance to The WorkPlace on creating a dual track for the program -- one that would continue to expand the program to new communities and a second that would take a deeper dive into the communities that had implemented the program to determine its broader impact, what changes had occurred with their partnering WIBs as a result, and where changes needed to be made to ensure future sustainability. A good example of where this is happening is in Dallas, which was the first expansion site for the Platform to Employment program. We are now working jointly with The WorkPlace and the local WIB to assess current opportunities for continuing to expand their work to support the needs of older workers and those in long-term unemployment.

7. As a Federal grant program, the Social Innovation Fund must ensure that no Federal funds are used for lobbying purposes. Please describe how you will ensure that the AARP Foundation and its subgrantees will adhere to these guidelines?

AARP Foundation is a 501(c)(3) organization that does not engage in any lobbying activities

Narratives

whatsoever and is a separate legal entity from AARP.

AARP Foundation currently receives over \$73 million from the Federal government through agencies that include the IRS and the Departments of Labor and Agriculture. Each year we undergo an A-133 audit, which has consistently stated our funds have met all necessary Federal grant compliance, including strict prohibition of funds for lobbying purposes. In addition, our internal audit team reviews each program to ensure proper adherence to our non-lobbying policies.

Each year all AARP Foundation employees are required to take an ethics class, which includes a section on lobbying activities so each employee understands our guidelines on the Foundation's prohibition on lobbying activities.

In addition, relevant AARP Foundation staff undergoes Federal grant training and review on a biennial basis (most recently completed in January, 2014). With the implementation of OMB's Super Circular (now called the Omni Circular) this December, we will be holding another Federal grant training and review with our staff at the start of 2015. We plan on using similar training with the subgrantees during our on-boarding grantee convening.

Subgrantee compliance begins in the application stage during which we will make explicit the need to meet Federal grant guidelines, which include clearly demonstrated internal policies to achieve compliance. Per our budget, we have scheduled initial site visits and an on-boarding convening to review the subgrantee's necessary compliance. During these meetings we will make the prospective subgrantees aware of the Federal compliance requirements prior to awarding the grant. Currently, all of our grant agreements include language that grant funds (regardless of source of funding) cannot be used for lobbying purposes. We will maintain this language and include additional language with regards to Federal grant compliance requirements.

Finally, one of the reasons we selected community colleges as the cohort of subgrantees is their capacity to meet the requirements of Federal grants as they already receive Federal funds. As part of our site visits, we will review their current policies and procedures and confirm their adherence to the grant guidelines. Subgrantees will also undergo desk audits to provide documented justification for their costs allocated to the subgrants when they submit their financial reports.

Narratives

8. Your application identifies that you will be using a collective impact approach. Please explain how your proposed project aligns with each of the collective impact characteristics as defined in the SIF 2014 Notice of Funding Availability.

AARP Foundation is very interested in building its own capacity for implementing a collective impact (CI) approach across its impact areas and interventions.

As part of that effort, we are at the preliminary stages of implementing the CI approach with the WESI model -- but see great potential for this approach in increasing the sustainability of WESI as well as using our learnings to influence and inform our work in other program areas throughout the Foundation.

While AARP Foundation has worked with partners for years to support our program implementation and growth, our approach to the SIF will move beyond having partners to fulfill singular aspects of a program, to forming coalitions that are committed to working together to strengthen employment outcomes and achieve long-term impact. We have learned through implementing our own programs and supporting the work of other organizations that no single entity, however innovative or powerful, can solve complex social problems alone. Our goal for the SIF is to develop a coalition that helps to facilitate improvements at every stage of the program and clearly show the linkages between those stages, each partner's role and the outcomes each partner is able to achieve.

This year we are in the process of developing cross-sector coalitions made up of three critical entities: the education institute (the community college), the workforce system (the WIB) and local employers. Other entities may become involved in the coalition and collective impact approach including non-profit organizations, media partners, and state and/or federal agencies. If selected for a SIF grant, this would develop into a formal coalition beginning in one subgrantee site where we will continue to build on the collective impact approach as outlined below:

Common agenda: With the community colleges taking the lead, each employment sector is educated on the purpose of the initiative, and the importance of addressing the economic security needs of older adult women. AARP Foundation has been purposeful in developing the model and maintaining the

Narratives

principles and standards, but not being overly prescriptive and enabling enough flexibility to allow the communities to create the most appropriate agenda for addressing the issues and achieving the goals. For example, the partners in each community college's area determine the specific industries and job categories that will be the focus of the WESI, which helps align the agenda and related benefits for the partners.

Decision Making, Data and Shared Measurement: Among our emerging coalitions, we have already seen examples of data being used and shared for the purpose of continuous improvement. An example of this is in Denver where Arapaho Douglas Works is the lead organization and together with the local community college and employers has used the data collected to improve its other programs while employers have used the information to increase and improve outreach and recruitment techniques for older adults. As part of the SIF initiative, we would work with coalition members to develop common data collection and outcome measures as well as ways to ensure accountability among members.

Mutually Reinforcing Activities: AARP Foundation has been intentional in identifying the strengths and weaknesses of various partners who implement the WESI model. We have learned that both Workforce Investment Boards and community colleges conduct employment training and readiness activities that are mutually reinforcing and have different types of expertise to contribute to the various components of the client experience. This experience begins with the communications and marketing that builds awareness about the program through employment and post-hire follow up with clients. For example, in one of our current expansion sites, the college works directly with a local WIB, a local non-profit, and a national employer to identify core competencies needed for specific available and hard-to-fill jobs. The partners come together not only to create a cohesive curriculum that will meet the needs of the employers, but also will help the non-profit better identify, select and support the candidates to enroll in the program.

Continuous Communication: We are just now in the process of building the mechanisms and processes by which we create continuous communication among our community college grantees and their partners. For example, once current WESI grantees are selected, AARP Foundation and the community colleges host partner meetings to engage key stakeholders and begin to create the common agenda. After that and as part of continuing to build engagement and relevance, the

Narratives

partners take part in information sessions attended by potential program participants. This makes communication active rather than passive. The partners come together on regular, monthly phone calls attended by the leads for each organization where opportunities are identified and challenges are surfaced and mitigated. AARP Foundation will continue to facilitate this communication process and based on our learnings we will develop a more structured approach as coalitions are built for the SIF initiative.

Investment and Sustainability: From the start and as part of its theory of change, AARP Foundation is planning for sustainable change within the communities and organizations implementing WESI. Therefore, while we are at the initial stages of the CI approach with WESI, we are working with our grantees to build their capacity to move beyond a focus on funding for "program maintenance" to developing an action plan and using the data that can lead to community change and engagement of other investors. We believe that our work on the SIF will help us build a greater understanding and capacity to accomplish this particular aspect of collective impact.

Backbone Organization: Because AARP Foundation believes the pathway to scale for the WESI model is through existing platforms like the community college system, for the SIF AARP Foundation will assume the role of "backbone organization." In this role, we will continue to provide regular and systematic assessments of progress attained by the various partners through site visits and phone calls. Additionally, we recognize more concerted expertise and managerial resources will need to be devoted to the collective impact approach. Therefore, we propose to focus these efforts initially in one subgrantee site, and select this site based on the community college's interest and capacity to work closely with the local WIB and multiple local employers in high-growth sectors.

Our ability to analyze data, observe the dynamics and provide feedback to the colleges in real time allows us to monitor progress toward the common agenda while allowing the local partners to build the trust and relationships necessary to achieve long-term outcomes.

Evaluation and Accountability: We believe there are several phases to the evaluation and accountability element of collective impact. Initially, we are focused on ensuring that our partners are collecting the data needed and identifying the indicators of success and using this information for continuous learning and improvement. Simultaneously, we are working with our partners to ensure

Narratives

resources are being allocated appropriately and that the capacity needed to implement the program is built effectively. In implementing the SIF and CI approach in one site during the first year, we will ensure strong data collection and performance measurement activities are in place, where the partners begin to hold themselves and each other accountable for achieving short-term results. In terms of evaluation, having a coalition in place that is committed to CI, will help facilitate evaluation activities and ensure involvement among partners during the early stages of evaluation planning.

9. In your application, you state that the AARP Foundation will still be able to scale the WESI intervention if its application to the SIF is unsuccessful. In light of this, please discuss the value add of SIF.

Simply put, SIF provides us with the funding, "seal of approval," and project assistance that will allow WESI to increase exponentially the number of older low-income women who will obtain jobs, maintain employment and advance and manage their earnings for years to come. Without SIF's involvement the growth curve would be a more linear line with modest growth each year.

As AARP Foundation is developing its next three-year strategic plan, one of the impact goal areas is Income Generation. Through WESI, we are developing an intervention that will provide employment to the neediest individuals: 50-59 year-old women. However, to succeed in developing an intervention that seeks to make significant impact rather than incremental change, we need to secure partners from across sectors, private and public.

Walmart Foundation's financial support of WESI provides us with the start-up funding necessary for the project. We believe the Social Innovation Fund offers us with not only additional resources to invest in evaluation and expand our capacity to provide grants to community colleges aligned with our WESI intervention, but also, and even more importantly, provides us with an acknowledgement that our program is a worthy outcome-focused investment. External funders are aware of the comprehensive requirements to become a Social Innovation Fund grantee, which further spurs their interest in working with us.

In addition, the Social Innovation Fund's staff experience in evaluation, subgranting and scaling programs will provide AARP Foundation with tremendous insights from past lessons, which will

Narratives

maximize WESI's success.

As a learning organization that seeks best practices and innovative approaches to develop and implement interventions, the impact of becoming a SIF grantee will go beyond the WESI program and will create improvement in all of our grantmaking and programmatic efforts serving the vulnerable 50+.

Evaluation Issues for Clarification

10. Your application was unclear on how will you plan to use evaluation data to determine a potential subgrantee's capacity for growth. Please clarify this.

Based on clarifying guidance from CNCS staff, we focused the answer to this question on the data we use and the process we implement to assess and select subgrantees from the pool of potential applicants.

The WESI program model outlined in the proposal has been implemented in various forms for two years, expanding in January, 2014 to eleven (11) community colleges and continuing the expansion to an additional four (4) colleges in July, 2014. Throughout each phase, we have gathered and used data to improve our selection process and ensure we were identifying the best possible organizations to implement the work. We use evaluation data as part of a three-step process for determining a potential grantees capacity for growth.

- a. Establishing indicators of success.
- b. Integrating indicators into the request for proposal (RFP).
- c. Integrating evaluation results into the rubric used by reviewers to score grant proposals.

To play that out further with an actual example: we have profiles of over 1500 individuals in our data collection system who have contacted us to enroll in the program since the beginning of 2014. Of those individuals, we are tracking the specific outcomes of 514 participants who enrolled in the program. Our analysis of conversion rates has indicated that entry into the coaching component of the program -- and the quality of that coaching -- has high correlation to participants successfully completing the remaining components, entering training, and entering employment. That analysis

Narratives

and use of data enabled us to refine the RFP to select the remaining four (4) colleges to put higher emphasis (and subsequently, higher weight on the scoring of reviewers) on the college's capacity and experience to deliver coaching services for program participants.

11. How will you use evaluation data to improve grantee performance?

AARP Foundation has taken a different approach to working with our grantees involved in the WESI intervention than it has with its other partners and grantees. Rather than simply providing funding and waiting for quarterly reports to determine progress, AARP Foundation uses the systems we have built to collect data to monitor in real time the progress of WESI grantees so that we can provide support when needed and take corrective action immediately. We take a learning-focused approach to evaluation. We view our evaluation process -- and subsequently our approach to improving grantee performance -- as a cycle that begins with planning, is informed by data collection, and leads to analysis and reflection and then action and improvement.

From the time we on-board grantees during a two-day orientation, we are working with them to plan for success and continuous learning and improvement. Following the orientation, we hold monthly individual calls with the grantees to review their data with them and assess current performance as well as challenges to achieving their objectives. In addition, we hold monthly "community of practice" sessions with all of the colleges together to share insights, promising practices, and what the aggregated data is telling us.

As part of our internal practice for using data to improve grantee performance, we hold internal status review meetings on a bi-weekly basis where we analyze data, individual outcomes and waterfall reports to assess conversion rates. During these meetings and based on data, each grantee is literally given a "green," "yellow," or "red" designation for EACH component of the program so visually we know whether a grantee is on track or off and, if off, specifically where so we can provide immediate and relevant technical assistance. We then inform the grantee of their designation and for those that are "yellow" or "red" we work with them to develop a plan of action to achieve "green" status.

For many grantmakers, data gathered from grantees is simply a tool for the grantmaker's internal metrics that are too often never shared with the grantees. We believe sharing, reviewing and

Narratives

understanding the data in collaboration with the grantee provides all constituents with the greatest opportunity for program success.

Continuation Changes

n/a