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**AARP's BankSafe Grants:
Preventing Exploitation Through Bank Staff Training
REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS**

Overview

This Request for Proposals (RFP) seeks to identify multi-disciplinary coalitions positioned to assist AARP with its BankSafe initiative. BankSafe empowers financial institutions and the aging network to protect consumers from financial exploitation and keep retirement savings safe. AARP is seeking to partner with communities within the financial industry to create a free online training program that will help employees in local financial institutions to detect and prevent exploitation. Selected coalitions will receive from AARP a grant of \$10,000 to help develop and disseminate training to banks and credit unions.

Background

Every day, thousands of older Americans are targeted victims of financial exploitation, not only because they have accumulated a total of \$18 trillion in assets, but also because they are more likely to suffer from cognitive decline, making them vulnerable to such activity. Each victim loses, on average, more than \$120,000. Moreover, banks lose more than \$1 billion in deposits each year from financial exploitation. With perpetrators tending to prey on older Americans who own the most assets, financial exploitation will only increase as the older population continues to grow.

Most preventive exploitation efforts have focused on increasing consumer knowledge, but that may not be enough. Many vulnerable people need an actual advocate in the form of a trusted family caregiver or banker, and not just when an event of exploitation happens, but before the money leaves the account.

Financial institutions can help safeguard older Americans' savings by not only educating their customers but training their staff efficiently to detect financial abuse, and adopting effective practices and policies in the fight against financial exploitation.

Four out of five older customers prefer establishing accounts at a financial institution that has at least

one exploitation-prevention service in place; and many of those customers said such a commitment to protection could influence their decision on where they bank. One of the top asks from consumers is for their banks to ensure their employees are highly trained to detect exploitation and take the necessary steps to prevent it.

While some national organizations offer training, most of it involves how to comply with regulatory requirements. Much training gloss over the subject and are developed without combining subject matter expert input from banking or the aging community. Still other training material (e.g., Oregon Banking Association) is comprehensive yet lacks the modern sophistication and interaction of an online course targeted to the learner who wants to learn rapidly and at his or her own pace. With exploitation perpetrators continually getting savvier, non-profits in the aging community must team up with financial institutions to outsmart and outmaneuver the perpetrators.

Purpose of Grant

Bolstered by consumer demand from older adults, AARP and Oregon Bankers Association are working with the financial services industry to develop an online training course for bank employees. This training is based on the best practices of the Oregon Bankers Association, Barclays UK, and others. Developing this course with the input of financial institutions will ensure that the bank frontlines are trained with state-of-the-art, web-based training with robust and real-world scenarios, gamified activities, and case studies within each module to assist in the learning process. Having access to this training will ensure that banking professionals apply critical thinking and practical skills to recognize common signs of financial exploitation and empower them to take appropriate action. The BankSafe training modules are designed specifically for banking professionals with roles across all levels of financial institutions.

It is of utmost importance that frontline employees—namely bank tellers, credit union associates, and their supervisors—find the training to be engaging and empowering, as they are part of the primary defense in preventing financial exploitation of older Americans before money leaves the account. By training customer-facing employees with proper tools and response methods, the exploitation of older Americans is prevented—proactively, before it ever happens. Proven case examples have shown banks saving millions of dollars by implementing simple training.

The intention of this grant is to fund multi-disciplinary, multi-stakeholder collaborative groups (composed of aging advocates that are working in conjunction with financial institutions) to help develop the content of the training, which should include state-specific content. In the first grant round, which took place in 2016, the grantees selected were Florida, Arizona, Utah, Oregon, Minnesota, and California.

To learn more about BankSafe click [HERE](#).

Applicant Eligibility

Grant recipients must have a current and/or committed working partnership with financial institutions, indicated by letters of support from those partners. Further, partners must be willing to assist the grantee with review of content, must require that all financial institution employees take the BankSafe training, and must participate in testing to show potential effectiveness of training.

In addition, AARP will draw on the following criteria in selecting the coalitions. With that in mind, applications should demonstrate the following:

- A lead organization could be a non-profit charitable organization or a government agency. (If the lead organization is a financial institution the grants funds must go directly to a non-profit agency that they are collaborating with on this project.)
- Applicants should possess a proven passion for preventing exploitation and understanding of the specific challenges faced by older Americans in regard to financial exploitation, fraud and dementia; as evidenced by prior activities and accomplishments implementing efforts to safeguard against financial exploitation.
- Applicants should preferably have a capacity to deploy training to banks and credit unions, and be able to describe successful experiences implementing training and/or educational programs.

Application Response Requirements

The application should include the following information and address the following questions:

1. Lead Organization's Information
 - Organization Name
 - Street Address
 - City/State /Zip
 - Telephone
 - Website
2. Contact details of the:
 - Primary Contact (i.e., the primary contact person who will receive emails and updates during the application process.)
 - Executive Director
 - Name of the Organization to receive funds
3. The specific geographic area(s) your proposed project will serve – a city, county (or multiple counties), your entire state, or a region. (Character Limit: 250)

4. How would this project make an impactful contribution in your proposed target area?
(Character Limit: 300)

5. Do you currently have relationships with a variety of banks and credit unions willing to collaborate on developing and disseminating BankSafe training? **Please state the nature of the relationship and include letters of support from partners that specify the following** (Character Limit: 1,000):
 - partners' willingness to help the grantee review content,
 - how many branches, customers, and employees the partner has,
 - confirmation that all employees of the bank or credit union will be required to take the training at least once, and
 - confirmation that partners agree to participate in testing to show potential effectiveness of training.

6. Describe how you would disseminate the BankSafe training program with financial institutions to reach the intended audience. For instance, do you currently have a vehicle for dissemination to reach the intended audience?

7. Please be sure to address the following components of the effort: (a) building bridges between the aging network and the financial services network, (b) identifying the key components that should be included in training for frontline financial services providers, (c) the number of financial services professionals likely to be trained during the grant period, (d) strategies for deploying training, and (e) the number of banks/credit unions likely to embed the training in their protocols. (Character Limit: 1,000)

8. Please describe a past initiative or program that demonstrates your capacity to execute a similar initiative with firm quantitative goals. If possible, please be sure to share your experience developing educational resources to train financial institution employees' on preventing exploitation in the past. (Character Limit: 500)

9. The organization should have letters or emails demonstrating commitment to assist in training development and deployment to financial services professionals; such communications should include those from at least two of the following organizations: AARP state offices, aging service providers, Adult Protective Services, and other allied organizations.

10. Project Program Director's contact details and brief biography.
11. Has your agency/coalition applied for funding from AARP in the past five years? If so, please list previous programs.

Goals, Expected Outcomes, and Desired Impact of the Partnership

With AARP's support, grantees with their financial institution partners will:

- Engage banks, credit unions, and aging network providers in the BankSafe principles;
- Work with AARP to customize training for frontline financial service professionals that addresses exploitation, fraud, and related challenges associated with dementia; training will include helping the service professionals to identify red flags, have difficult conversations, and report suspected exploitation or fraud to the proper authorities;
- Develop innovative approaches, collateral, and tools to assist frontline financial services professionals to better identify and address exploitation and fraud, and to work with dementia referrals;
- Deploy training to financial service professionals during the grant year; and
- Work to voluntarily embed the training in the systems and training protocols of banks and credit unions.

Partner Responsibilities

Selected coalitions will work collaboratively with AARP. Specifically, selected coalitions will be expected to:

- Designate a coordinator who will take primary responsibility for working with AARP on initiative components;
- Participate in one meeting offsite with other grantees (travel costs provided separately by AARP);
- Develop content for your state's module that covers laws on reporting exploitation and a list of community services available for older adults;
- Review training content and collateral materials with stakeholders in your area, including your financial institution partner;
- Form a coalition with AARP and other coalition partners that helps review materials;
- Develop a dissemination plan for the training so it reaches the widest audience and has deepest impact possible;
- Work with industry to have them voluntarily embed the training in bank and credit union training protocols; and,
- Participate in AARP meetings and evaluations.

AARP Services and Support

Assistance from AARP will include, but is not limited to, the following:

- Issuing up to six grants of \$10,000 each for participation in the project (via a statement of work),
- Technical assistance,
- Assess to final online training valued at \$250,000
- Customizable training materials, and
- A “Starter Kit” of support materials (screensaver, tips sheets, infographics, etc).

Project Timeline

March 31, 2017: RFP is released

May 15, 2017, 5 p.m. ET: Deadline for Submission

June 1st, 2017: Project Starts

June 1st, 2018: Project Complete

June 15, 2018: Final Report Due

BankSafe Application

Any questions regarding the application or instructions should be addressed to Jilene Gunther at jgunther@aarp.org or 202-434-3869.

Please submit your application online to BankSafe@aarp.org no later than May 15, 2017 at 5 p.m. ET.