



STRATEGIC PLAN: AN OVERVIEW

2023–2025



In 2020, RRF Foundation for Aging implemented a three-year strategic plan that reaffirmed our commitment to improving quality of life for older people and established four priority areas for our grantmaking: caregiving, economic security in later life, housing, and social and intergenerational connectedness.

Our 2023-2025 strategic plan builds on what we've learned from this work and the successes of our grantees. The updated and refined plan also expands upon our organizational values to advance diversity, equity and inclusion, create meaningful partnerships to maximize the impact of our work and reduce ageism. In addition, the plan notes our interest in supporting efforts that leverage technology as a practical tool for achieving our mission.

The purpose of this strategic plan is to articulate and guide the direction of RRF Foundation for Aging. This overview is organized into the following sections:

- A. Mission, Vision, and Values: What is our reason for being and core belief system?
- B. Goals: What do we want to accomplish over the next three years?
- C. Grantmaking Focus/Priority Areas: What topics are of particular interest to us?
- D. Grantmaking Approaches/Pathways: What types of projects do we fund?
- E. Conclusion: What is our main take-away?



A. MISSION, VISION AND VALUES

Our mission describes our purpose. Our vision describes our aspiration for what we hope will happen when we succeed in carrying out our mission. Our values articulate the core beliefs and enduring principles that guide our decisions and actions at every level of the organization.

MISSION

Our mission is to improve the quality of life for older people.

VISION

Our vision is that ALL older people will be valued and respected as full participants and contributors in community life.¹

VALUES

AGE-INCLUSIVITY

Recognizing and combating age bias and its consequences, and promoting age-inclusive programs, policies, and practices

COLLABORATION

Understanding that building strategic partnerships leverages resources and expands reach

CONNECTION

Appreciating that meaningful relations between families, neighborhoods, communities, and networks support success at every age

EQUITY

Acknowledging that communities are strengthened by diversity and by reducing inequities, especially for historically marginalized older people

GROWTH

Understanding that learning and contributing occurs throughout one's lifetime

IMPACT

Recognizing that achieving a profound, positive, enduring effect on large numbers of older adults is accomplished by investing in effective organizations, sound program models, strong policies, and strategic dissemination

INNOVATION

Embracing fresh approaches and new solutions

KNOWLEDGE SHARING

Acknowledging that promoting the creation, application, and dissemination of knowledge will advance the field

TRANSPARENCY

Appreciating that honesty, integrity, and open communication will build internal and external trust

VOICE

Recognizing that giving and having voice is critical to the well-being of all older people and that finding, listening to, and including the voices of people with lived experience is essential to our work

B. GOALS

The Foundation has outlined five goals that will provide direction for our work. Over the next three years, RRF will strive to:

1. Advance Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion: Bring an equity-focused and race-conscious lens to all aspects of our work
2. Identify and support work that has the potential for high impact: Define, operationalize, and measure impact of priority areas, partnerships, and communications
 - Practice proactive grantmaking: Advance priority areas to strengthen impact (see Section C for priority areas)
 - Expand collaborative grantmaking and non-traditional partnerships: Build philanthropic, public, and private sector relationships to enhance co-funding opportunities, leverage our resources, and amplify our work
3. Grow and strengthen communications: Publicly share our grantee partners' outcomes, lessons learned, and our philanthropic interests and priorities
4. Incorporate best practices and new forms of philanthropy: Explore and embrace options such as general operating support, amplified grantmaking, trust-based philanthropy, and social impact investing, when appropriate
5. Reduce ageism: Encourage and expand age inclusivity, expose age bias, and promote age-inclusive programs, policies, and practices

C. PRIORITY AREAS

Priority areas are particular topics in aging that are given higher priority within the Foundation's grantmaking program. We have four priority areas: caregiving; economic security in later life; housing; and social and intergenerational connectedness. Each priority area affords an opportunity for RRF to fund innovative and effective projects that relate to Aging in Community, thereby fostering and supporting the ability of older people to live well and fully, wherever they prefer, for as long as possible.



CAREGIVING

Ensuring that unpaid care partners are informed, well-trained, and supported while providing care to an older loved one

ECONOMIC SECURITY IN LATER LIFE

Valuing the dignity of older people through efforts that ensure and protect their economic security and well-being



HOUSING

Promoting efforts that make housing more affordable and provide coordinated services that enable older people to live safely in community settings

SOCIAL & INTERGENERATIONAL CONNECTEDNESS

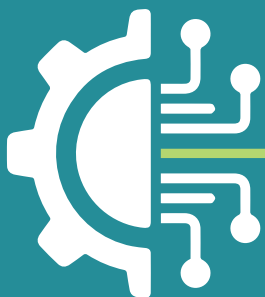
Reducing isolation and loneliness in later life through efforts that strengthen meaningful social bonds, including those that cut across generations



TECHNOLOGY AS A CROSS-CUTTING THEME

In addition, RRF is interested in supporting efforts that leverage technology as a practical tool for enhancing the quality of life of older adults. Within our grantmaking framework, technology is regarded as a "cross-cutting theme" that has relevance across all priority areas and program pathways.

While priority areas reflect RRF's main funding interests, we remain open to supporting other promising opportunities in aging on a selective basis. The Foundation will direct at least 70% of its grantmaking dollars to projects that address a priority area each year, leaving up to 30% for other promising opportunities.



D. GRANTMAKING APPROACHES

RRF awards grants to eligible nonprofit organizations embarking on important projects that have a significant focus on older people. These projects typically fall into one of the following categories:

PATHWAYS

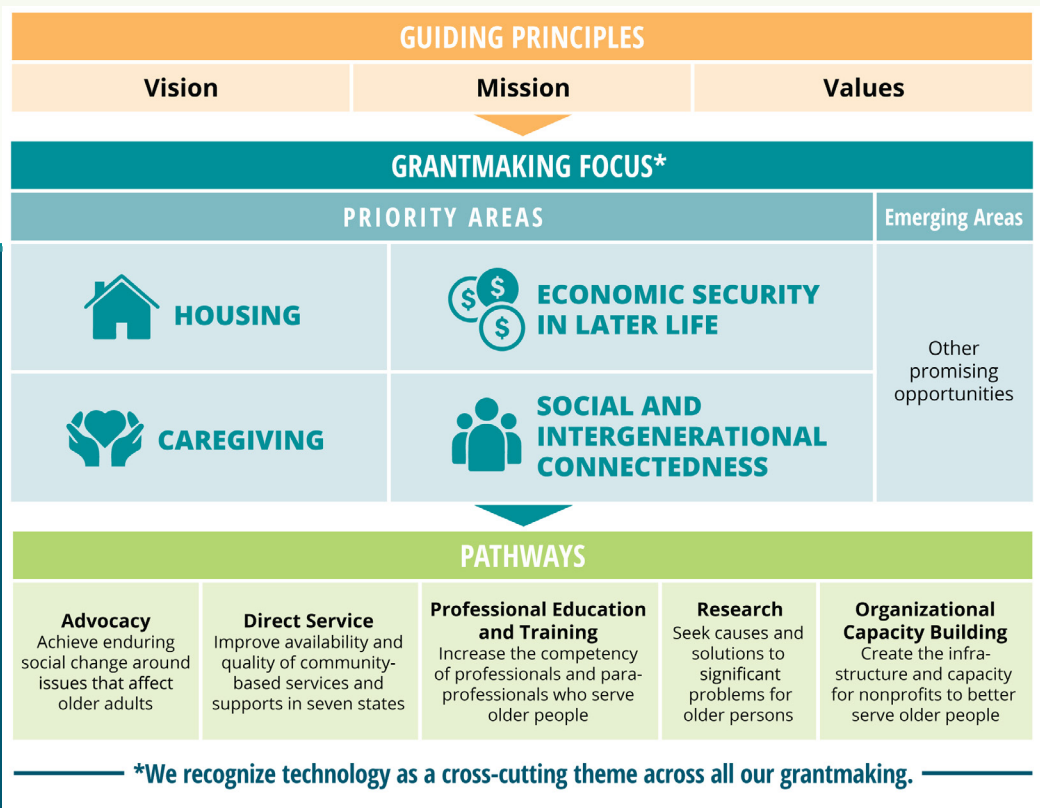
- **Advocacy** for improvements in public policy that achieve enduring positive change around issues affecting older people
- **Direct service** to improve the availability and quality of innovative models and approaches to community-based services for older people. Direct service grants are awarded to organizations based in: Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Missouri, Wisconsin, and Florida
- **Professional education** and training to increase the competency of professionals and paraprofessionals whose work focuses on older people
- **Applied research** to seek causes and solutions to significant problems that affect older people

OTHER GRANTMAKING APPROACHES

RRF recognizes and will support other effective grantmaking approaches such as:

- Organizational Capacity Building grants, awarded to eligible nonprofits based in Illinois, help organizations create the infrastructure and capacity to better serve older people (e.g., resource development, strategic planning, and governance).
- General Operating Support grants, awarded selectively (by invitation only to key grantee partners), provide the stability and flexibility organizations need to advance their missions, sustain day-to-day operations, and take advantage of opportunities that arise in one of RRF's priority areas.

RRF'S GRANTMAKING FRAMEWORK



E. CONCLUSION

For more than 40 years, RRF Foundation for Aging has been a leader in philanthropy in aging and a champion for older people. This strategic plan embodies our continuing commitment to RRF's mission and a renewed commitment to advancing the Foundation's vision for the future. Moving forward, we will become increasingly focused and proactive, with a greater desire to be intentional and strategic. As we carry out this plan, we anticipate learning valuable lessons, sharing our insights, and achieving positive impact on the quality of life for older people.

¹Beginning in 2023, RRF defines "older people" as age 60 and above.