

Wanted: Innovative Ideas On Improving Income

(NAPSA)—To help the millions of older workers who have been out of a job for a year or more, a leading charity dedicated to aiding older adults is funding new income-support and job-creating ideas.

The unemployment rate for older Americans has reached its highest level in 60 years. Millions have been unemployed for a year or more and, once unemployed, older adults are less likely to find a similar-paying job to the one they lost; when and if they find new employment, they usually earn less.

Among older people struggling to make ends meet, 32 percent lack health insurance and 50 percent put off medical or dental care or stop taking prescribed medications because they can no longer afford it.

It used to be, homeowners could put their house up for sale when hit hard by financial bad luck. Today, nearly a third of older homeowners have seen the value of their house decline, often going below the money they owe on it.

The program's backer, the AARP Foundation, believes the most critical element of the recovery is for the unemployed to find jobs offering good wages and benefits. There is another crucial component, however, that is often overlooked: helping them deal with the effects of long-term unemployment and with the potential reduction of unemployment benefits. While out of work, millions of older workers need access to income supports and social services necessary to help meet their basic needs and protect their families' financial security.

The new Income Grants Program will fund ideas and programs to help older people



The recession and its aftermath have been hard on low-income older Americans, but help may soon be at hand.

secure employment and increase their financial stability. It gives priority to proposals that identify and implement unique models for providing a continuum of services for unemployed people over 50. These services should address both the need to upgrade skills and get jobs and to increase existing financial stability by increasing access to benefits, work supports and services that help protect families from severe economic distress.

Projects should emphasize short-term and intermediate actions to help people reduce the time it takes to recover some level of financial stability.

If you know of an individual or organization with an innovative idea for helping older Americans get back to work, you can go to www.aarp.org/incomegrants to learn more. Letters of inquiry are due Oct. 3, proposals are required by Oct. 17, and winners will be announced in December 2011.

AARP Foundation is a leading charity dedicated to helping low-income older adults meet their everyday needs—food, housing, income and personal connections. AARP Foundation serves individuals, communities and organizations nurturing the seeds of hope for millions of older Americans each year through direct assistance and legal advocacy.