



ENCORE NETWORK

Who We Are

The Encore Network is a learning community made up of organizations that work at the intersection of three powerful opportunities in the second half of life: 1) achieving a new level of personal growth and meaning, 2) connecting with and contributing to society in new ways, and 3) building stronger communities. Member organizations offer programs and services in one or more of these areas.

Mission

The Encore Network shares information, best practices and other resources; offers opportunities for joint problem solving, collaboration and assistance; and engages in projects of mutual support and benefit to member organizations.

Membership

The Encore Network consists of 14 organizations (listed below). As potential new members are identified, the founding members will collectively determine who is added and when. The founding members share these characteristics:

- *Community-based*—working locally (city, county, state, multi-state), with some replicating programs to new areas
- *Innovators*—developing new models and new practices
- *Practitioners*—putting new programs on the ground to directly serve 50+ individuals and/or social sector organizations

Initial Communications Framework

- *Bi-monthly conference calls*—topic-driven discussions of common interest.
- *Email "listserv" (or perhaps eventually an online forum or community)*—any member can query the group on any issue at any time.
- *Expanded matrix*—inventory of information in various categories that enable each member organization to understand how it compares to others.
- *Shared mailing lists*—adding members to newsletter and other distributions.
- *Regular updates*—mechanism for regularly sharing news and information.
- *Repository*—platform for archiving documents to which we all want to have access.
- *Face-to-face meetings*—when conferences and national meetings permit.

Guiding Principles

1. *Make it productive.* Discussions have constantly stressed the value that will result from creating a framework for shared learning and exploration.

2. *Keep it simple.* Members want a low-investment structure (in time and money) without a new set of obligations or tasks.
3. *Avoid redundancy.* The founding members believe that they will benefit from a network to share their experience in developing new on-the-ground programs, but they also recognize the importance of continuing to understand and explore potential intersections with national efforts such as Age4Action, AARP, NCOA, Administration on Aging, and others in the aging network.

Reasons for Members to Engage

- *Problem solving:* "Can we brainstorm some ideas on this program; I'm stuck."
- *Requests for information:* "How do you set fees for programs and services?"
- *Seeking experience:* "Has anyone encountered a situation like this?"
- *Reusing assets:* "I wrote a grant proposal like that last year. I can send it to you and you can tweak it for this new purpose."
- *Coordination and synergy:* "Can we combine our efforts to create a program that will meet both our needs?"
- *Collaboration:* "Can we work together to find funding or to build national visibility?"
- *Discussing developments:* "What do you think of this new resource? Does it help?"
- *Documentation projects:* "We have faced this situation several times now. Let's write it down once and for all."
- *Site visits:* "Can we come and see your evaluation tools? We need to create that here."
- *Mapping knowledge and identifying gaps:* "Who knows what? What are we missing? What other groups should we connect with?"

Encore Network Members

- ✓ Aspiranet
- ✓ Civic Ventures (convener)
- ✓ Coming of Age
- ✓ Discovering What's Next
- ✓ Encore!Hartford
- ✓ Experience Matters
- ✓ Life by Design NW
- ✓ Life Planning Network (convener)
- ✓ Next Chapter Kansas City, Shepherd's Center of Kansas City KS
- ✓ Project Renewment Groups
- ✓ SHiFT!
- ✓ Transforming Life After 50: Public Libraries and Boomers
- ✓ The Transition Network
- ✓ Vital Aging Network