

Building an Outreach & Engagement Ecosystem - Workshop

Workshop Purpose

Throughout this session, we shared our approach to strengthening outreach and engagement through intentional partnerships, strategic investments, and sustainable funding practices.

Now it's your turn.

In this exercise, participants will apply the concepts discussed today to a real challenge facing Aging Network organizations: **reaching populations that are eligible for services but remain disconnected from programs and supports**. Your task is to create an outreach and engagement ecosystem—not simply an outreach campaign.

Scenario

Your Area Agency on Aging has identified a priority population that is significantly underrepresented in services despite demonstrated need.

Choose a focus population:

- Family Caregivers
- Rural older adults
- Tribal and Indigenous elders
- Immigrant and refugee communities
- African American elders
- LGBTQ+ older adults
- Individuals with limited English proficiency
- Cultural organization

Your Area Agency on Aging leadership team has allocated an one-time Outreach and Engagement Innovation Fund of \$100,000 and asked your team to develop a strategy that:

- Expands awareness of available services
- Strengthens trust and community connections
- Builds capacity beyond the pilot of the one-time funding

Small Group Activity (15 Minutes)

Step 1: Identify the Challenge

Choose a priority population your AAA struggles to reach and discuss.

What is the biggest barrier preventing this population from accessing services and support?

Describe one key barrier:

Step 2: Build the Ecosystem

Identify three critical partners that would help reach and engage this population and describe the role each would play.

Consider:

- Faith communities
- Healthcare systems
- Housing providers
- Senior centers
- Cultural organizations
- Public agencies
- Community-based organizations
- Libraries

Example:

Partner	Role
Tribal Health Clinic	Connect eligible elders to services through trusted healthcare providers.
Tribal Elders Council	Provide guidance on culturally appropriate outreach and engagement strategies.
Tribal Community Center	Host outreach events and connect elders with available resources and supports.

Partner	Role

Step 3: Invest the Funding

You have \$100,000 to invest. Determine how you would allocate funding across strategies:

Investment Strategy	Amount
Community Partnerships & Contracts	\$
Trusted Messenger/Ambassador Programs	\$
Translation & Language Access	\$
Outreach Events & Community Engagement	\$
Digital Outreach & Communications	\$
Staff Capacity	\$
Data & Evaluation	\$
Other	\$
Total	\$100,000

Considerations:

- Which investment received the largest allocation and why?
- Which investment is most likely to create long-term impact after the one-time funding ends?

Step 4: Define Success

Identify:

- One output measure
- One outcome measure

Example: (Tribal and Indigenous Elders):

Measure Type	Metric
Output	Partner with Tribal cultural leaders to train 10 trusted messengers who shared information at community gatherings, cultural celebrations, and health clinics resulting in 300 conversations about available Family Caregiver services.
Outcome	25% increase in referrals to aging and disability services from Tribal partners.

Group Response:

Measure Type	Metric

Report Out (10 Minutes):

One group will share:

1. The priority population selected
2. Their most important outreach partner
3. Their most significant investment strategy
4. One metric they would use to measure success

Facilitator Debrief – Close out

- Which investments create lasting community infrastructure?
- What role do trusted messengers play in outreach success?
- How do we balance direct services with outreach investments?
- What strategies are most likely to remain sustainable after one-time funding ends?