We have an opportunity...to invest in the creation of a more age-friendly world, build resilience in organizations working to meet the needs of older adults, support innovation that will improve the way we age and adapt to the needs of older neighbors, and bring people together to work as one on behalf of older adults.

Our Vision

Older adults and their caregivers have the support and resources they need to thrive.

What would success look like? All older adults would have the care and support they need. They’d have access to safe and affordable places to live, as well as nutritious food for themselves and others in their households.

Older adults who have been marginalized or excluded from past opportunities due to who they are or who they love would have full access to the resources they need to live full and healthy lives. They’d feel seen and heard.

Older people would have opportunities to participate in their communities and have a voice in decision-making and problem-solving. They’d be able to contribute their talents and ideas—as part of the workforce or in community leadership roles—for as long as they wished to do so.

What does success look like? It’s a world where all people are treated with dignity and respect, regardless of their age, and where older adults have everything they need to thrive.
The Need

Americans are getting older. Between 2009 and 2019, the number of Americans age 65 and older increased by 36 percent, from 39.6 million to 54.1 million. And the number continues to grow rapidly. In 2019, adults 65 and older represented 16 percent of the population. By 2040, we expect that group to be 21.6 percent of the total population.

This presents unique opportunities…and some challenges, as well. We need to strengthen the programs and policies we rely upon to age well. Change workplace culture to embrace an older group of workers. Make sure we have adequate housing that is accessible and designed for residents of all ages. And we need to start today.

Unfortunately, many government programs aimed at supporting older adults have been cut or are serving fewer people than they did in the past. And many philanthropic organizations have redirected their funding into other priority areas.

According to Candid, an organization that tracks information on philanthropy, America’s largest foundations are directing less than one percent of their funds to causes related to aging. Why? Some people see youth as a better investment in the future. Others believe that older adults’ needs are being fully met by government programs. For others, it may simply come down to ageism.

Healthy communities depend on people of all ages contributing their unique experiences and insights to create safe and vibrant places to live, work, and play. Older adults have a key role to play. They serve as leaders and mentors. They help provide context and history for younger generations. They contribute to thriving economies, both as part of the workforce and as a group with significant spending power.

Now is the time to invest in building healthier, stronger communities for people who are aging…and that’s all of us. We can do this by embracing innovation; learning and adapting; listening and responding to older adults, especially those from historically marginalized communities; working together for greater impact; and building resilience in organizations that have been and continue to meet the needs of older adults.

Our Strategy

This funding strategy is the culmination of what we have learned both as a grant maker over the past five years as well as what we have heard from our partners, grantees, older adults, and community leaders interested in issues relate to aging and longevity. This mission-driven strategy provides a roadmap for the future and helps ensure that our financial and social capital is used in ways that helps us achieve our vision.
We can't move forward without looking at where we've come from…

A Brief History
NextFifty Initiative was formed in 2016 through the sale of InnovAge, a non-profit PACE (Program of All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly) provider, to a private equity firm. With initial assets of over $200M, the foundation was created as an independent nonprofit entity completely separate from InnovAge. We did, however, retain a focus on and commitment to serving the older adult population. As part of the formation agreement, 80 percent of the initial corpus and any associated investment income is restricted to benefit the residents of Colorado and 20 percent is unrestricted.

A Path and a Process
In 2021, NextFifty Initiative rolled out a new strategic plan aimed at guiding the organization through the end of 2023. One goal of the plan was to create and implement a diverse and coordinated funding, investment, and partnership strategy.

A committee of board and staff members was formed to lead the way and provide a recommended strategy. The committee solicited feedback from key internal and external contributors, including leading voices on older adult support services, impact investing, and policy/advocacy. Among other things, the committee explored or considered:

- Feedback from grantees, community leaders, philanthropic partners, and other key parties
- Clarifying how we and others working in philanthropy define impact
- The role of community engagement in expanding our reach into marginalized communities
- The role of impact investing and policy/advocacy work in advancing philanthropic goals
- Creating a clear definition of innovation, as it applies to the work of NextFifty Initiative

In the fall of 2022, the committee recommended a funding and investment strategy, which was approved by the board of trustees.

The Strategy
The goals, strategies, and investment vehicles that you’ll see outlined in our funding strategy represent the mission-aligned path we will take in pursuit of our vision. While the specific tactics may change based on what we learn along the way, this strategy will guide our work moving forward.
FUNDING INVESTMENT STRATEGY

OUR GOALS
• Older adults have improved quality of life.
• Organizations serving older adults have the resources they need to succeed.
• New and innovative approaches to aging are identified, supported, and replicated.
• Ageism is reduced.

OUR STRATEGIES
• Elevate issues related to aging and longevity.
• Financially support organizations and efforts meeting — or seeking to learn about — the needs of older adults.
• Promote equity by supporting initiatives that address the intersectional identities of older adults and acknowledge how those identities affect the way people age and access care.
• Identify and stimulate innovative approaches and initiatives to advance healthy aging.
• Serve as a leading voice and influencer on systemic issues impacting older adults.

OUR VEHICLES & TACTICS
• Direct grants to organizations contributing to improved quality of life for older adults.
• Investments in innovation and technology that will advance longevity or enhance aging.
• Policy and advocacy work to educate and influence leaders on issues related to aging and longevity.
• Private sector partnerships that align with our vision and mission.
• Convenings to learn about community needs, connect people working on aging initiatives, and align efforts with others in the aging space and/or philanthropy for greater impact.
• Sharing our learnings to bring greater awareness to aging/longevity issues and advance the work.

VISION
Older adults have the support and resources they need to thrive

GOALS
What we seek to achieve

INPUT & FEEDBACK FROM COMMUNITY

LEARNING & EVALUATION

ADAPTATIONS BASED ON WHAT WE LEARNED & HEARD

VEHICLES & TACTICS
The methods we will use
Impact and Learning
We understand that the broad societal change we seek is multi-faceted and complex…and that we can’t achieve our goals by working alone. Changing the way that our society views aging and works to create age-friendly communities will require partnership and collaboration in addition to leadership and initiative.

So, with complex goals, multiple partners and collaborators, and diverse funding and investment vehicles in play, how will we know if our plan is working? How will we know if we’re making a positive impact for older adults?

It depends. We want to understand how each piece of our overall plan is going to help us to achieve our goals. We’ll consider the stories we hear from grantees as well as more specific, quantitative performance metrics. We’ll determine ways to measure the impact of specific projects and investments as well as how to measure systemic change through utilization of broader, third-party assessments. We’ll learn and adjust, and then we’ll do it again.

We’ve built continuous learning, feedback/input, and adaptation into our strategy, because we know that we can always improve. It’s important to us that we are good stewards of the resources we manage. And it’s important to people who are aging—and that’s all of us!—that we have every opportunity to thrive.