

# Encore Entrepreneurs: Creating Jobs, Meeting Needs

*Mix a slow economy and a shortage of jobs with a large number of aging baby boomers looking for meaning and purpose in their work. The result is a growing number of “encore entrepreneurs” seeking to launch income-generating ventures that make a positive difference in their communities.*

**1** Approximately 25 million people – one in four Americans ages 44-70 – are interested in starting their own businesses or nonprofit organizations in the next five to 10 years.

- Aspiring entrepreneurs have an average of 31 years of work experience and 12 years of community involvement. Five out of six (85 percent) report significant management experience – 15 years on average.
- More than one-third (37 percent) of Americans ages 44-70 have already started a business or nonprofit venture and, of these, 42 percent are still actively involved in their ventures.
- Nearly half of aspiring entrepreneurs (47 percent) say it is very likely they will start a business or nonprofit organization in the next five to 10 years.

**2** More than 12 million of these aspiring entrepreneurs are potential encore entrepreneurs who want to make a positive social impact as well as a living.

- Nearly half (48 percent) of aspiring entrepreneurs say having a positive social impact is very important or say they are seeking to meet a need in the community, meet a social challenge or provide a service to others.
- Potential encore entrepreneurs are driven by working on something they “are passionate about” (84 percent) and by “a sense of meaning and a feeling of accomplishment” (83 percent). Almost as important: having “a positive impact on your community,” staying “active and productive” (both 80 percent), and putting “the skills and talents you’ve learned to use” (76 percent).
- Potential encore entrepreneurs seeking to meet a community need or tackle a social challenge are in-

terested in social services (37 percent), poverty alleviation (28 percent), working with at-risk youth, economic development and healthcare (all at 24 percent), the environment (19 percent) and human rights or social justice (18 percent).

**3** Encore entrepreneurs have realistic financial expectations and plan local, small ventures to meet needs in their communities.

- Two in three (67 percent) plan on having a local, state or regional (as opposed to national or international) impact.
- Most potential encore entrepreneurs (72 percent) expect to create small ventures, employing up to 10 people.
- Two out of three encore entrepreneurs (68 percent) would consider their potential businesses or nonprofit ventures worthwhile if they earned less than \$60,000 a year.
- Nearly one in five (18 percent) say they would consider a venture worthwhile if they earned less than \$20,000 per year.
- Encore entrepreneurs have modest financing needs. Two out of three (67 percent) report that they need \$50,000 or less to get started and only one in five (20 percent) said they need more than \$100,000. A large group (47 percent) expects to tap personal savings to launch ventures.
- About half (52 percent) say they have delayed launching ventures because they do not feel secure enough financially and nearly as many (47 percent) say they believe they would not be able to obtain adequate financing. But nearly six in 10 encore entrepreneurs (58 percent) say the current economic climate makes them more likely to start their own businesses or nonprofit ventures.

*The study, funded by MetLife Foundation, is based on a survey by Penn Schoen Berland that included a telephone survey of 1,000 Americans ages 44-70 and a follow-up online survey of 400 potential entrepreneurs. For more information, go to [www.encore.org/research](http://www.encore.org/research).*