

Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is the goal of the Outsmarting Investment Fraud program?

The goal of the FINRA Investor Education Foundation's Outsmarting Investment Fraud program is to arm investors with the tools and knowledge needed to protect themselves against fraud. Developed in collaboration with AARP, state securities regulators and noted fraud experts, the campaign's research-based curriculum and documentary style DVD teach investors how to recognize and resist sophisticated persuasion tactics and take simple steps to protect their finances and family before making any investment decision.

2. Who are the most likely victims of investment fraud?

While anyone with money is bound to hear from a fraudster at some point, older investors ages 55 to 65 are frequent targets of investment fraud. Research funded by the FINRA Investor Education Foundation—the largest foundation in the U.S. dedicated to investor protection—found that a majority of investors within the 55 to 65 age group do not perceive themselves as vulnerable to investment fraud; yet many reported engaging in investment behaviors that put them at risk. The FINRA Investor Education Foundation's research also revealed that a majority of investment fraud victims are not who you might think—they are financially knowledgeable, highly educated and self-reliant when it comes to investment decisions.

3. What can individuals do to protect themselves from investment fraud?

There are simple steps every investor can take—like checking the licensing status of a financial professional or the registration of an investment product—to protect their finances and family before making any investment decision. The Outsmarting Investment Fraud program is designed to arm investors with the tools and knowledge needed to recognize and prevent investment fraud.

4. How will this campaign benefit my community?

By implementing an Outsmarting Investment Fraud program in your community, your organization can help arm investors with the tools and knowledge they need to recognize and prevent investment fraud.

5. What can my organization do to help fight fraud?

Whether you represent a state securities regulator or belong to a local civic organization—there's a role you can play when it comes to educating investors about investment fraud. Use the planning guides in this toolkit to organize an event at your library or club. Order fraud fighting materials, download fact sheets and share them in your community. Encourage other organizations and your local newspapers and television stations to highlight this issue.

6. What resources are needed to hold an investor protection event in my community?

An investor protection event can be as large or small as your time and resources allow. An event might be large with 300 community members or smaller with a group of 10 people. It can be planned by a single person or a network of local community organizations. What matters is that the event delivers the right messages and provides information that participants can use.

7. What is the *Outsmarting Investor Fraud* curriculum?

Outsmarting Investment Fraud is a research-based curriculum that combines moderated presentation with video clips and hands-on learning activities. Developed in collaboration with noted fraud experts, the curriculum has been shown to reduce an individual's susceptibility to fraud. When tested in 2008 and 2009, the FINRA Investor Education Foundation found that individuals who participated in an *Outsmarting Investment Fraud* curriculum session were 50 percent less likely to respond when later approached by a fraudster.

8. How do I use this toolkit?

This toolkit provides a step-by-step guide to planning an Outsmarting Investment Fraud program or event in your community. Additional elements of the campaign include print, radio and television public service announcements (PSAs) that can be made available upon request and previewed at www.SaveandInvest.org.

9. As an individual, what can I do to raise awareness about investment fraud?

There's a role for every one of us when it comes to preventing investment fraud. If you are a member of a civic organization, volunteer group or club, organize a meeting to talk about this issue and watch the "Tricks of the Trade: Outsmarting Investment Fraud" DVD. Talk with your local library or community college about hosting an event. Use this toolkit as a guide for planning and share materials with family and friends.

10. Who is the FINRA Investor Education Foundation?

The FINRA Investor Education Foundation is the largest foundation in the United States dedicated to investor education. Its mission is to provide underserved Americans with the knowledge, skills and tools necessary for financial success throughout life. The FINRA Foundation awards education and research grants and develops targeted programs aimed at segments of the investing public that could benefit from additional resources.