

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) Health Policy Research Scholars (HPRS) Program

COMMONLY USED ABBREVIATIONS

CFA: Call for Applications

HPRS: Health Policy Research Scholars

NLPC: National Leadership Program Center. The NLPC for HPRS is Johns Hopkins University.

NOTE: To provide further clarity, and based on several questions we have received from applicants since the application launch, we have updated this list of FAQs. Updated or new FAQs are indicated in **YELLOW**.

HPRS PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY

Which fields or disciplines are eligible for the Health Policy Research Scholars (HPRS) program?

The Health Policy Research Scholars Program will enroll up to 50 first and second year pre-doctoral scholars (as of September 2016) from multiple research-focused disciplines who are interested in health policy research and are from underrepresented populations and/or disadvantaged backgrounds. Examples of eligible individuals from underrepresented populations and/or disadvantaged backgrounds include, but are not limited to, first-generation college graduates, individuals from lower socioeconomic backgrounds, individuals from racial and ethnic groups underrepresented in doctoral programs, and individuals with disabilities. Specifically, we aim to recruit doctoral students from a variety of social sciences (e.g., urban planning, health, economics, ethnography, education, social work, etc.) who are training to be researchers.

Which degrees does HPRS consider clinical degrees?

Doctoral degrees that are primarily for professional training (MD, DO, DPT, DVM, DDS etc.) are not eligible for this program. Note that this is not an exhaustive list but a sample of clinical degrees that are not eligible and that this is a program that is focused on research based doctoral students. **(FAQ added 4/5/2016)**

Are women considered underrepresented?

The determination of whether a particular demographic is underrepresented will depend on the field of study. In general, women are not considered underrepresented in public health and social science doctoral programs. **(FAQ added 4/5/2016)**

Is HPRS using the number of credits to determine if the applicant is on his first or second doctoral year?

Students must be full time students entering their 1st or 2nd year, full time status as an incoming student and completion of full time 1st year requirements are what determine eligibility.

(FAQ added 4/5/2016)

Is there an alternative program for 3rd and 4th year doctoral students?

Not at this time. (FAQ added 4/5/2016)

Is there an age requirement or limit?

No, however the program is designed for full time doctoral students.

Can I apply to Health Policy Research Scholars even if I am already funded by RWJF?

Yes, applicants that have other active RWJF funding, grants, or contracts may apply if they meet all eligibility requirements.

Can a previous RWJF grantee or a faculty that has received RWJF trainings write a Letter of Recommendation?

Yes. (FAQ added 4/5/2016)

PROGRAM DETAILS (4/5/2016 FAQs Separated from Program Activities and Terminology)

What is the time period (start/end dates and duration) for this program?

Health Policy Research Scholars will officially begin September 1, 2016 and will end in approximately five years, or once the Scholar completes his or her doctoral requirements – whichever occurs first.

What is the time commitment for the program?

This program will be supplemental to your doctoral training and may require up to an additional 2 hours per week during the academic year for the online training modules. During the summer the scholars will participate in training on site with one of the partners for between 2 and 4 weeks.

Where will the HPRS Program happen?

The training will be done virtually, with the exception of the dates outlined in the next question.

What are the key anticipated activities or dates I should reserve?

- Participation in 2016 Fall Institute, September 25-28, 2016 and annually thereafter
- Participation in the 2017 HPRS Culture of Health Summer Institute at Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore 3-4 weeks in June 2017
- Participation in the 2018 Health Policy Research Experience June and July 2018

- Participation in the 2019 Health Policy in Washington DC 2 weeks in June 2019

Is the travel and lodging expenses covered by the HPRS Program?

Yes, travel and lodging to events required of RWJF scholars are covered. (FAQ added 4/5/2016)

Do the mentors need to travel as well? Are their expenses paid?

Mentors only need to travel once in the 1st year to the fall institute and these expenses will be paid by the program. (FAQ added 4/5/2016)

What will the participant stipend be and for what can it be used?

Health Policy Research Scholars will receive up to \$30,000 per year for up to 4 years. Grants will be made to the scholars' home institution to support the scholar's participation in the program. Scholars will work with their home institutions to determine how the grant funds will be used to support the participants' successful completion of the program, for example, living expenses, relevant conference/workshop registration fees, travel, supplies, equipment, software and other scholar needs. Grant funding is not intended to support the individual's tuition or indirect expenses of the home institutions. The stipend is to be used to support the scholars in succeeding in their doctoral programs while incorporating a health policy context.

Are there any restrictions on receiving the stipend for students that are Graduate Assistants or Teaching Assistants?

Students who have graduate or teaching assistantships are still eligible to receive the HPRS stipend; however, if a student has another stipend based scholarship there may be restrictions or limits to the other stipend the student receives. Please note that the HPRS stipend will be given to the scholar's home institution to disburse to the scholar, so any stipends will have to follow home institution rules on multiple stipends. (FAQ added 4/5/2016)

What is the dissertation grant?

Dissertation grants for scholars who propose research related to health policy will be available through a competitive process.

How many Health Policy Research Scholars applicants will be funded?

Up to 50 Health Policy Research Scholars will be enrolled in the 2016 Cohort.

What is meant by a “health policy research?”

Health policy and systems research (HPSR) is an emerging field that seeks to understand and improve how societies organize themselves in achieving collective health goals, and how different actors interact in the policy and implementation processes to contribute to policy outcomes. By nature, it is inter-disciplinary, a blend of economics, sociology, anthropology, political science, public health and epidemiology that together draw a comprehensive picture of how health systems respond and adapt to health policies, and how health policies can shape – and be shaped by – health systems and the broader determinants of health.

Alliance for Health Policy and Systems Research, WHO 2016

<http://www.who.int/alliance-hpsr/about/hpsr/en/>

What is “Change Leadership?”

Change leadership means thinking big about impact, responding to urgent needs, and actively tolerating risk. This is the kind of big, bold way of working—together—that will get us to a Culture of Health.

What is meant by “home discipline?”

The “home discipline” is the primary discipline that the scholar is studying for their respective doctoral degree.

What is meant by “Home Institution Mentor?”

The Home Institution Mentor is the faculty member who has agreed to work with the scholar to support, advocate, and guide their successful progress toward the student’s doctoral degree. The Home Institution Mentor will accompany the scholar at the Fall Institute. The Home Institution Mentor will receive honorarium from the NLPC each year that the scholar is active in the program. Home Institution Mentors will also receive reimbursed expenses related to relevant mentor convening associated with the program.

What is a “co-mentor”?

The Home Institution Mentor and/or applicant may select a second faculty mentor to assist with research, academic, and career mentoring the applicant. The Co-Mentor may have special expertise in an area of research that is of interest to the applicant and complements the skills, time and availability of the applicant’s primary Home Institution Mentor.

What is a “partner site?”

Partner sites for HPRS are Mayo Clinic, University of California-Los Angeles, University of Michigan, and George Washington University. Research will be conducted in the second summer of the program at Mayo Clinic, University of California-Los Angeles, University of Michigan. Additional partner sites may be considered in the future and at the discretion of Johns Hopkins University, the National Leadership Program Center managing the HPRS program.

What is a “Culture of Health Certificate?”

The Culture of Health certificate is an online and Johns Hopkins University-based (HPRS Culture of Health Summer Institute 2017) curriculum. Courses will include: public health, health disparities, social justice, research methods, population health, and health policy that lead to a certificate of attendance from the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health.

How does Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) define “interdisciplinary?”

The next generation of leaders in health policy must have the skills to work collaboratively across and with leaders, community members, researchers, agencies, and institutions from multiple disciplines to develop research-informed health policies...this constitutes the interdisciplinary approach.

GENERAL INFORMATION AND APPLICATION PROCESS

Do I have to submit my application online?

Yes. Applications will only be accepted through RWJF’s Application & Review (A&R) system at MyRWJF.org.

What is the application deadline and late submission policy?

The deadline is 3:00 p.m. ET, April 19, 2016. To be accepted for review, your application must be completed and submitted by the deadline. To be fair to all applicants, RWJF will not accept late applications.

PLEASE NOTE: Letter of Reference recommended deadline is April 12, 2016 at 3:00 p.m. ET.

How do I find my applicant ID?

Once you access your application from your "MyRWJF.org" home page, your applicant ID is displayed in the upper right corner on all screens.

What if I forget my MyRWJF.org password?

You should click on the "Forgot your password?" feature found on the MyRWJF.org sign-in page. You will be assigned a new temporary password that is valid for 24 hours. When you sign in with the temporary password, you will be prompted to change your password.

Who do I contact for technical questions about how to use the MyRWJF.org online system or programmatic questions?

Please submit your questions via email to RWJF_HPRS@jhu.edu

Can multiple doctoral students submit a joint application?

No. Each applicant/doctoral student must submit their own, individual application and required materials.

How often must I save my work to avoid having the system timeout?

As the system will timeout after two hours of inactivity, please be sure to periodically save your work.

Why is the system not saving my data?

Be sure you are navigating through the system with the links on the left-hand navigation and not your browser "back" button. Also be sure to click one of the "Save" buttons located at the bottom of the screens as you complete your work.

What is an "invited contributor?"

The application allows you to invite individuals (e.g., mentors, faculty, or advisors) to review your application.

What can an invited contributor do?

Depending on the access level you granted when inviting a contributor, s/he will be able to:

- View
- view and edit, or
- view, edit, and submit

How do I change the access for an invited contributor?

Select the "Invite Contributors" button. Choose an appropriate access level and select "Save."

Can more than one person work on the application at the same time?

Yes. You should know that if more than one person is working in the same section, the database will record the last saved additions/edits.

If I have invited collaborators, how can I tell who updated the application last?

The "Last updated on" information is displayed in the lower right corner of the home screen.

How do I submit my application? When will the Submit button become available?

Once you have completed all required sections of your application/application, the Submit button (located in the upper right corner of the home screen) will become active.

I am just starting my doctoral in the fall, can I use my personal email and address until I receive the university's one?

Yes. You will have the chance to change it prior to the application deadline. After the application deadline changes can only be made by the program administrators.

(FAQ added 4/5/2016)

I am just starting my program and I don't know any of the faculty at my new Home Institution. Can I use my previous professors as my references and mentors?

You can use your previous professors as references but the mentor has to come from your new home institution. Most incoming doctoral students are assigned a faculty member upon acceptance and you should contact that person or your department for assistance. A home institution mentor is required to ensure that students have the maximal benefit of the program in helping them succeed in their respective doctoral programs. (FAQ added 4/5/2016)

How will I know that my application has been successfully submitted?

You will receive an email from MyRWJF.org confirming that you have successfully submitted your Health Policy Research Scholars application. There are four ways to confirm your application was successfully submitted:

- a. You will see a screen confirming your submission.
- b. If you registered with a valid email address, you will receive an email message confirming your submission.
- c. Sign in at myRWJF.org and select the solicitation name from the list of your applications.
- d. Once at the solicitation Home screen, a message will appear at the top of the Home screen stating that your application has been submitted and is no longer available for editing.

NOTE: Once you have completed all application requirements, you must return to the home page (of the A&R system) to gain access to the “**SUBMIT**” button.

How can I check the status of my application once it is submitted?

We expect to receive many applications, all of which must go through the same review process. If you have a question about a specific application, please send an email to the address shown in the “Contact Us” link found in the navigation bar to the left. Dr. Thomas LaVeist is the Director and Dr. Harolyn Belcher is the Co-Director at Johns Hopkins University. Dr. Lydia Isaac, is the HPRS Project Manager.

Can I make changes to my application after it has been submitted?

No. So please make sure you thoroughly review your application/application before submitting.

REVIEW AND SELECTION PROCESS

What happens after I submit my application?

All applications that are submitted by the deadline go through a rigorous review process. You will be notified by the program office about the status of your application/application. If you are selected as a semi-finalist, the HPRS Program will schedule an interview with you and request additional information including your Home Institution’s tax verification identification number, authorized official, and Mentor Agreement from your Home Institution Mentor. For details about the selection criteria and timing, refer to the Call for Applications.

How do I know my application will receive a fair review?

One of our Guiding Principles states, “We must select grantees (applicants) fairly.” We have processes in place to honor this principle including the requirement that application reviewers acknowledge our [“Guidance for Reviewers on Conflicts of Interest and Confidentiality Related to Application Review.”](#) Approximately seven percent of application reviewers have disclosed a conflict of interest. Those disclosures generally resulted in the reassignment of that application to another reviewer. The percentage is lower than what might otherwise be expected because often actual or perceived conflicts are known and avoided in advance by assigning the application to another individual for review.

When will finalists be notified and when will Health Policy Research Scholars start?

Finalists will be notified in July 2016. Health Policy Research Scholars will officially begin September 1, 2016.

Will I receive specific comments on my application after a decision is made?

No. RWJF does not provide individual critiques of or comments on applications not selected for funding. General feedback is usually provided in the turndown letters.

If I am not selected for this program, will I still be eligible for other RWJF funding opportunities in the future?

Yes. Interested applicants may apply for other RWJF funding opportunities, grants, and/or contracts in the future.

GENERAL QUESTIONS ABOUT RWJF**Where can I learn more about the RWJF Culture of Health Action Framework and overall Culture of Health Initiative?**

Please visit the [Culture of Health website \(www.cultureofhealth.org\)](http://www.cultureofhealth.org) for more information.

How can I find out more about RWJF and its initiatives?

Please visit the Foundation's Website (RWJF.org), for more information about funding opportunities, interest areas, lessons learned from past grants and contracts and other information related to the mission and work of RWJF.

If we are not chosen for this funding opportunity, will we still be eligible for other RWJF grant opportunities?

Yes, interested applicants may apply for other RWJF grants.