



Policies for Action

Policy and Law Research to Build a Culture of Health

Advancing Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion in Policy and Law Research: 2019 Call for Proposals

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

I. About Policies for Action and this Funding Opportunity	3
What is Policies for Action?	3
How does Policies for Action fund research?	3
II. Areas of Interest	4
Are there specific questions, areas, or policies we should address in our proposal?	4
Is RWJF receptive to research on policies/outcomes in other countries?	4
III. Eligibility	5
What types of projects are eligible?	5
How are you defining “historically disadvantaged or underrepresented”?	5
What is the education requirement for principal investigators?	5
What is a home institution and what types of home institutions are eligible to apply?	6
As an academic clinical faculty member, I am not on tenure track, but I am promotion eligible. Am I eligible to apply?	6
Are postdocs eligible for this funding opportunity?	6
What are the requirements for the set-aside New Jersey funds?	7
Can I apply to this program even if I am already receiving support from a research fellowship/traineeship?	7
Are former or current principal investigators or project directors on RWJF funded grants ineligible?	7
Are current or former recipients of RWJF leadership grants eligible to apply?	7
Am I eligible to apply if I have applied to another, comparable fellowship program?	8
May a proposal list multiple principal investigators?	8
Does my research mentor have to be located within my home institution?	8
Does my career mentor have to be located within my home institution?	8
Can my research and career mentor be the same person?	8

How will my career and research mentors be compensated?	9
If I am not chosen for this funding opportunity, will I still be eligible for other RWJF grant opportunities?	9
How should I know whether to apply for this CFP or another opportunity?	9
IV. Funding	10
How much funding is available per grant?	10
What are allowable uses of grant funding?	10
How should I estimate my budget?	10
Does the maximum award include indirect costs?	10
What are the direct and indirect rates?	11
What is open access?	11
V. Crafting and Submitting the Letter of Intent and Full Proposal	12
What elements should a successful letter of intent include?	12
What is the application process?	12
How do I submit my LOI?	12
Are there formatting requirements for the LOI?	12
Does the two page limit for the LOI project narrative need to include any references?	13
Should the LOI address dissemination of the final research?	13
What role will each of my mentors play?	13
Who should I contact with questions regarding my LOI?	14
VI. Selection Process	15
Who will review my LOI?	15
How will my LOI be evaluated?	15
How will I know if I have been selected to move on to the full proposal phase?	15
What is the anticipated start date for the award?	16
Will we receive specific comments on our proposal after a decision is made?	16

I. About Policies for Action and this Funding Opportunity

What is Policies for Action?

Policies for Action (P4A) was created in 2015 as one of four signature research programs of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF). P4A solicits, funds, supports and disseminates transdisciplinary research to help develop the evidence base on policies, laws, system interventions, and community dynamics that can promote the goals of RWJF's vision of a **Culture of Health**. P4A is overseen by the **national coordinating center (NCC)** at the Urban Institute.

This year, P4A is issuing a special call for proposals (CFP) to advance health equity by actively seeking new and diverse perspectives from the policy research field. This opportunity is designed to support early career researchers from multiple disciplines to better understand and find solutions that will promote health equity and foster action on policies and laws that ensure all people in America can attain and preserve good health and well-being.

How does Policies for Action fund research?

Policies for Action currently funds **five research hubs** and **twenty grantee** teams. The collaboration among these institutions brings expertise and experience in conducting research that matters at the local, state, and national policy levels, and exemplifies our aim of supporting cross-sector and transdisciplinary research.

The five research hubs conduct research within specific issue areas, such as housing, education, criminal justice, health insurance expansion, and the impact of work-family policies on health and well-being. They also provide strategic support for the program and its grantees.

P4A also funds investigator-initiated research, and after its third call for proposals in 2018, currently supports twenty grantees, each focusing on a single research project. You can learn more about the grantees and their projects [here](#).

II. Areas of Interest

Are there specific questions, areas, or policies we should address in our proposal?

We are interested in learning how policies can promote lifelong health and health equity for individuals, families, and communities. We also want to better understand the various factors that promote the adoption and spread of policies that benefit all people in America. We welcome applicants from any field to submit proposals for research.

Proposals should investigate policies across a range of possible sectors such as housing, employment and training, education community development, political ideologies, and perspectives. By policies, we mean laws and regulations at the federal, state, and local levels, but also private-sector practices, such as those affecting families and children, workplaces, neighborhood conditions, and community development. Both public and private sector policies and practices can significantly impact a person's health. Research may examine established policies; new policies or approaches; and/or funding or other mechanisms for implementing, enforcing, or sustaining them.

We welcome all policy research ideas but we will prioritize those that inform one or more of RWJF's focus areas: 1) [healthy communities](#), 2) [health systems](#), 3) [healthy children and families](#). You can learn more about each of these areas in the CFP. We encourage you to view a list of currently funded projects on our [website](#) to get a sense of the types of research that we fund.

Is RWJF receptive to research on policies/outcomes in other countries?

This CFP focuses on domestic policies. However, if there are international outcomes and policies that could be relevant to building a Culture of Health in the U.S., we will consider these on a case-by-case basis.

III. Eligibility

What types of projects are eligible?

We believe collaborative, cross-sector research designs are best suited to inform policy action. We encourage applicants to propose interdisciplinary research teams as appropriate.

The program seeks to fund studies that can be conducted expeditiously using valid and appropriate research designs and analytic strategies. The research approach and methods employed may be drawn from outside those commonly used in health or policy research. Methods and designs that have been successful vary and include, but are not limited to quasi-experimental designs, natural experiments, implementation research, micro-simulation, mixed methods, qualitative research, and community based participatory research (CBPR). New sources of data can also be proposed and analyzed; for example, health and social service records, restricted-access survey or administrative data, social media data, or marketing data. Given that restricted data can take a long time to get access to, preferences will be given to researchers that already have data access.

How are you defining “historically disadvantaged or underrepresented”?

The term “historically disadvantaged” refers to the challenges facing individuals because of their race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, or similar factors. Eligible individuals include, but are not limited to, individuals from ethnic and racial groups underrepresented in research disciplines, first-generation college graduates, people from low-income communities, and individuals with a disability. These examples are intended to be illustrative, not exclusive.

Applicants who do not fall within one of these categories but who believe they are from a historically disadvantaged or underrepresented background will have an opportunity to describe their individual circumstances as part of the online application process.

What is the education requirement for principal investigators?

To be eligible for this award, principal investigators must have received a doctoral degree within the last 10 years (October 2, 2009). Applicants must have their doctoral degree at the time of application (October 2, 2019). Doctoral degrees include MDs and JDs.

What is a home institution and what types of home institutions are eligible to apply?

As stated in the call for proposals, awards will be made to organizations, not to individuals. A home institution is an organization the participant selects to receive the grant funds. Typically, the home institution is the individual's employer. A home institution must possess the administrative and financial capacity and experience to accept the award and be:

- Based in the United States or its territories;
- An accredited academic institution or nonacademic research institution
- Willing to receive the funds from RWJF; and
- Able to distribute funds in a manner that is consistent with RWJF policies

The home institution will be responsible for signing a letter of agreement with RWJF and submitting financial and narrative reports to the Foundation.

As an academic clinical faculty member, I am not on tenure track, but I am promotion eligible. Am I eligible to apply?

Clinical or non-tenure track research faculty within an accredited academic institution eligible for promotion (to associate and full professor) are eligible to apply for this program.

Are postdocs eligible for this funding opportunity?

No, postdocs are not eligible for this funding opportunity. Researchers applying from an academic institution must have an appointment at the institution at the time they are applying for the award.

What are the requirements for the set-aside New Jersey funds?

This call for proposals has set-aside funds for up to two awards. To be eligible for these set-aside funds, researchers must be proposing a research project conducted in New Jersey *and* their home institution must be located in the state of New Jersey. Applicants considered for these set-aside funds must meet both criteria. If applicants only meet one of these two criteria but meet all other eligibility criteria for this funding opportunity, they will still be eligible for general funding.

Can I apply to this program even if I am already receiving support from a research fellowship/traineeship?

Investigators may not be receiving support from other research fellowships/traineeships at the time they begin the program (i.e., any NIH K award or equivalent). Investigators are not prevented from applying to other fellowships/traineeships while participating in the program. Because they have already demonstrated research expertise, former or current principal investigators on an NIH R01 research project or equivalent are not eligible to apply.

Are former or current principal investigators or project directors on RWJF funded grants ineligible?

To be eligible for this funding opportunity, applicants must never have served as a project director or principal investigator on a grant from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. Individuals who have been awarded RWJF grants to support predoctoral training are eligible to apply.

Are current or former recipients of RWJF leadership grants eligible to apply?

If you have previously been awarded an RWJF leadership training grant, you are not eligible for this funding opportunity. Examples of leadership programs include, Culture of Health Leaders, Interdisciplinary Research Leaders, and Clinical Scholars.

Am I eligible to apply if I have applied to another, comparable fellowship program?

You are still eligible to apply if you are in the process of applying for another, comparable fellowship program but you will not be able to accept both awards. You will need to alert the P4A national coordinating center if you are applying for more than one fellowship and let them know if you have been accepted. You will need to choose between the two funding opportunities.

May a proposal list multiple principal investigators?

No, there may only be one principal investigator listed on this application. You will need to list your two mentors, career mentor and research mentor on the application. You may include any other co-investigators that you plan to work with in your proposal narrative.

Does my research mentor have to be located within my home institution?

Your research mentor can be located within your home institution, but this is not a requirement. You may identify a research mentor outside of your home institution.

Does my career mentor have to be located within my home institution?

Yes, your career mentor must be located within your home institution.

Can my research and career mentor be the same person?

No, you are required to identify two different mentors as part of the application process.

How will my career and research mentors be compensated?

Salary support for (at least) two weeks of time for each of these mentors should be included in the applicant's budget.

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

Yes, interested applicants may apply for other RWJF grants in the future. You must submit to other opportunities in which you are interested; proposals declined by this funding opportunity will not be automatically considered by other programs.

How should I know whether to apply for this CFP or another opportunity?

To learn more about current and upcoming RWJF funding opportunities, and whether they might be of interest to you or your organization, visit the Foundation's [Funding Opportunities](#) page. You can also use RWJF's new [Program Finder](#) tool to identify programs that may align with your interests and goals. For other upcoming funding opportunities that may be of interest to your organization please visit RWJF's [Funding Opportunities](#) page.

IV. Funding

How much funding is available per grant?

Each grant will be capped at \$250,000 (in total and direct costs) for a maximum funding period of 24 months. A total of six grantees will be awarded, two of those projects are reserved for researchers located in and conducting research within the State of New Jersey.

What are allowable uses of grant funding?

Grant funds may be used for project staff salaries, consultant fees, data collection and analysis, meetings, research and/or career development trainings, mentor support, supplies, project-related travel, and other direct project expenses, including a limited amount of equipment essential to the project. In keeping with RWJF policy, grant funds may not be used to subsidize individuals for the costs of their health care, to support clinical trials of unapproved drugs or devices, to construct or renovate facilities, for lobbying, for political activities, or as a substitute for funds currently being used to support similar activities. RWJF budget preparation guidelines are available [here](#).

How should I estimate my budget?

A detailed budget is not necessary at the LOI stage (with the October 2, 2019 deadline) of the application process but will be required of applicants invited to the full proposal stage.

You should request the amount of funding you will need to complete your proposed research project. In the case of multi-year proposals, budget requests should reflect the entire grant period (typically up to 24 months), as opposed to an annual amount. When entering the budget request at the LOI stage, round up to the nearest hundred as opposed to estimating to the exact dollar amount. Grantees should plan for travel to RWJF's annual Sharing Knowledge conference (continental U.S. location TBD) during each year the grant is active.

Does the maximum award include indirect costs?

Yes, a budget request should not exceed \$250,000 and should include all direct and indirect costs.

What are the direct and indirect rates?

Budget requests should be inclusive of both direct and indirect costs. The Foundation's approved rate for indirect costs is 12% of all project costs (Personnel, Other Direct Costs, and Purchased Services). However, if the Purchased Services category equals more than 33% of the total of Personnel, Other Direct Costs and Purchased Services, RWJF allows 12% indirect on Personnel and Other Direct Costs, and 4% on Purchased Services. Keep in mind that personnel funding that leaves the Lead Applicant Organization is considered "Purchased Services."

What is open access?

Open access is the free, immediate, online availability of research articles. RWJF views open access as a mechanism for ensuring that anyone can access and use results, and translate research to actions that improve population health, well-being, and equity.

To ensure RWJF-supported research is made accessible to a wide and diverse audience, grantees who publish findings in peer-reviewed publications must do so in open access journals and/or must include funds in their budgets to cover the cost of making the resulting publications open access (typically \$2,000 - \$5,000 per manuscript). For more information on RWJF's policy on open access, [click here](#).

V. Crafting and Submitting the Letter of Intent and Full Proposal

What elements should a successful letter of intent include?

All applicants must submit a LOI that includes a project narrative describing the study (two pages maximum), a letter of recommendation/commitment from each of the two mentors identified in the application (career mentor and research mentor), CVs for the applicant and the career and research mentors. Applicants must follow the instructions and use the templates provided in the RWJF online system. Visit <http://www.rwjf.org/cfp/p4a-dei> and use the Apply Online link.

What is the application process?

There are two stages in the application process:

- Letter of intent (due October 2, 2019, by 3 p.m. ET)
- Full proposal (if invited, due January 2, 2020 by 3 p.m. ET)

How do I submit my LOI?

Applicants must submit a LOI through the RWJF Online System. Visit <http://www.rwjf.org/cfp/p4a-dei> and use the Apply Online link.

If you have not already done so, you will be required to register at MyRWJF at <http://my.rwjf.org> before you begin the application process.

Are there formatting requirements for the LOI?

Yes. Please refer to the templates in the online application system. All LOI narratives should be no more than two pages, single-spaced, with Arial 11-point font.

Does the two page limit for the LOI project narrative need to include any references?

References are not required in the LOI narrative, but if provided, they must fit in the two-page limit. In the full proposal stage, references can be submitted as an appendix, not counting against the full proposal narrative limit.

Should the LOI address dissemination of the final research?

Policies for Action is interested in “actionable” research that can be used to impact a Culture of Health. To that end, we’re interested in understanding how your team will work to actively disseminate your research for audiences who may use it. However, that does not need to be a focus in the LOI narrative. Full proposal applicants will be asked to address this.

What role will each of my mentors play?

Mentorship is an important component to this funding opportunity to help the grantees navigate their careers as early career researchers.

Career Mentor: the career mentor is located within the applicant’s institution and will advise the grantee on career development. This senior leader will assume the responsibility of ensuring the grantee learns how to successfully juggle the responsibilities of early career researchers including ensuring the grantee is well prepared for successful promotional review.

Research Mentor: the research mentor is a senior researcher with similar or complimentary research interests as the applicant. The role of this mentor is to help the grantee with conceptual and empirical challenges that may arise over the course of the grant and to develop an externally funded program of research. This mentor will also serve as a resource to the grantee as the grantee develops manuscripts and grant proposals during the award.

National Mentor: the national mentor is a nationally recognized leader in the grantee’s area of expertise that will provide additional career development, scholarship, and research support as needed. Depending on the needs of the grantee, this mentor may suggest improved methods, help the individual understand what it means to be a productive researcher at other institutions; and helping navigate challenges at the grantee’s institution.

The career and research mentors will be identified by the applicant as part of the application process. The NCC and the grantee will work together to identify an appropriate national mentor during the first year of the award.

Who should I contact with questions regarding my LOI?

You may contact the national coordinating center via email at policies4action@urban.org. Please note that in fairness to all applicants, we cannot give feedback on specific research ideas or proposals.

VI. Selection Process

Who will review my LOI?

Proposals will be reviewed by a committee composed of RWJF staff, leaders of the P4A national coordinating center (NCC) at the Urban Institute, the program's national advisory committee, and other expert reviewers as needed. Final funding decisions are made by RWJF staff and leadership.

How will my LOI be evaluated?

LOIs will be evaluated on the basis of:

- Eligibility in accordance with the eligibility criteria listed in the CFP;
- Merit of the candidate's research proposal in terms of clarity, methods, and innovation;
- Policy relevance to the question(s) being addressed;
- Alignment with topics described in this solicitation;
- Importance of the potential contribution to our collective vision of population health, well-being, and equity and how to achieve the intended outcome;
- Feasibility of the research proposed; and
- Evidence of the availability and commitment of qualified mentors.

How will I know if I have been selected to move on to the full proposal phase?

Applicants will be notified in late November, 2019 regarding whether they have been invited to submit a full proposal. Full proposals will be due January 2, 2020.

What is the anticipated start date for the award?

Grants will begin on April 1, 2020

Will we receive specific comments on our proposal after a decision is made?

RWJF policy prevents us from providing detailed proactive feedback; however, applicants are welcome to contact the NCC with specific questions about the status of their proposal.

Thank you!

Policies for Action: Policy and Law Research to Build a Culture of Health is funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, with management and direction provided by the national coordinating center at the Urban Institute.

Urban Institute • 500 L'Enfant Plaza • Washington, DC 20024

Policies4Action@urban.org • www.policiesforaction.org