

2013 Call for Proposals

Proposal Deadline: January 15, 2014



Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

NEW CONNECTIONS: INCREASING DIVERSITY OF RWJF PROGRAMMING

Junior Investigator

BACKGROUND

The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's (RWJF) *New Connections: Increasing Diversity of RWJF Programming* aims to expand the diversity of perspectives that inform RWJF programming and introduce new researchers and scholars to the Foundation to help address research and evaluation needs. The program invites *Junior Investigators*—scholars from historically disadvantaged and underrepresented communities who have received their doctorate within the last 10 years—to address RWJF program priorities. *New Connections* is a career development program for early- and midcareer researchers and consultants from underrepresented groups. The program provides support to grantees of the program and other individuals who are part of a network of eligible scholars. Through grantmaking, mentorship, and career development, *New Connections* enhances the research capacity of its grantees and network members. Preference is given to applicants with full-time appointments at colleges and universities. Eligible scholars include individuals from ethnic or racial minority or low-income communities, first-generation college graduates (i.e., the first person in one's family to receive a two- or four-year college degree), and others who historically have been underrepresented in research disciplines.*

THE PROGRAM

The *New Connections* program provides support and training to *Junior Investigators* to address priorities related to RWJF's program areas: Childhood Obesity, Coverage, Human Capital, Pioneer, Public Health, Quality/Equality and Vulnerable Populations. This round of *New Connections* funding will focus on research projects addressing health disparities. A brief overview of programming priorities and research topics is included on pages 3. Please go to www.rwjf-newconnections.org and click on "Research Topics" for more detail.

Junior Investigators will address program priorities in their applications by using the most appropriate methodology as determined through the application process. Approaches may involve using secondary data analysis, systematic review, mixed methods, or other relevant and innovative methods. As appropriate, original data collection may be an option, but is not encouraged. Applicants that choose to use secondary data analysis are responsible for identifying and acquiring the dataset(s). Among other sources, existing datasets funded by RWJF can be found at the Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research Health and Medical Care Archive (ICPSR).

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Selected finalists in the grantmaking process will develop a workplan at the outset of the grant. This plan should detail the milestones, timeline and key deliverables of the funded project for the 24-month grant period. *New Connections* program staff, along with RWJF staff, will review all workplans. As part of the deliverables for their funded project, *Junior Investigators* must prepare at least two manuscripts based on their *New Connections* project for submission to a peer-reviewed journal by the end of the grant. We will not accept manuscripts developed or published prior to the grant start date as project deliverables for *New Connections* funded work.

Applicants must select a mentor for the project who will provide his/her in-kind support. *Junior Investigators* must enroll in up to two methodological training programs during the grant. They may use some of their funding to hire a consultant, such as a biostatistician, mentor or research assistant.

We require *Junior Investigators* to include in their budgets attendance at one *New Connections* Annual Symposium (usually held in June), one Research and Coaching Clinic, and two meetings at the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation in Princeton, New Jersey—one at the outset of the award and another during the second year of the award. *Junior Investigator* applicants may include in their budgets travel expenses to present and disseminate their research at up to two key national meetings, but they may need to solicit additional funds from their home institution to cover these costs. We encourage applicants to participate in a Web conference for more detailed information about the application process. Please see page 7 for more details about the applicant Web conferences.

The *New Connections* national program office will be the first point of contact for *Junior Investigators*. *New Connections* will facilitate grantee communication with staff at RWJF. Programming staff help explain program areas at RWJF and how the Foundation operates.

TOTAL AWARDS

- We will award up to nine *Junior Investigator* grants of up to \$100,000 for a 24-month period.
- Of the nine *Junior Investigator* grants awarded in this funding round, up to two grants will be designated for *Public Health Law Research (PHLR)-New Connections* awards.
- In this funding round, we ask applicants to submit a brief proposal for selection as a *New Connections* grantee.

RWJF will award grants to the *Junior Investigator's* home university or other home institution. We will require grantee institutions to submit financial reports and other grant-related information on behalf of the *Junior Investigator*. We also expect grantee institutions to support the *Junior Investigator's* attendance at annual training events, such as the Symposium and Research and Coaching Clinic, methodological training, presentations and other networking and mentoring events. *New Connections'* funds are intended to support a minimum of 25 percent of the *Junior Investigator's* time over the entire 24-month grant period (i.e., including summer months). In addition, the grants will cover travel and other support. The work proposed must be completed within the 24-month period of the grant. Grant extensions are not encouraged.

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**The New Connections program is open to applicants from any group that has been historically disadvantaged or underrepresented in research disciplines. This includes, but is not limited to, individuals from ethnic and racial minorities historically underrepresented in research disciplines. It also includes persons of all races and ethnicity who come from groups that have historically been disadvantaged or underrepresented in research disciplines, such as first-generation college graduates and people from low-income communities. 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.*

RESEARCH TOPICS

RWJF works toward the goal of creating a shared national culture of health for all Americans, in which being healthy and staying healthy are esteemed social values. Reducing health disparities is essential to promoting a culture of health. Research projects for this round of *New Connections* funding must be focused on addressing health disparities. Please follow this link to learn more about [the work of RWJF](http://www.rwjf.org/content/rwjf/en/our-work.html): <http://www.rwjf.org/content/rwjf/en/our-work.html>. You can also find descriptions by visiting www.rwjf-newconnections.org and clicking on each program area's "Research Topics." *Junior Investigator* applicants must select up to two RWJF programming teams that align with their research interests and experience in their applications.

As referenced above, the current seven programming teams/portfolios at RWJF include:

- Childhood Obesity
- Coverage
- Human Capital
- Pioneer
- Public Health
- Quality Equality
- Vulnerable Populations

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

A host institution must be either a public entity or a nonprofit organization that is tax-exempt under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code and is not private foundation or non-functionally integrated Type III supporting organization. Host institutions must be based in the United States or its territories. The Foundation may require additional documentation.

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New Connections Junior Investigator program applicants must have completed a doctoral degree (including a JD for PHLR-NC applicants) within the last 10 years (obtained by September 1, 2004 or later);

- have agreement from the sponsoring institution to administer and be the recipient of the grant;
- be from a group that has historically been underrepresented in research activities, such as people from ethnic or racial minority groups, first-generation college graduates and people from low-income communities;***
- have never received a grant from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation;
- provide evidence of research skills addressing various aspects of health and health care (research fellowship or equivalent training or experience);
- be committed to the goals and mission of *New Connections*, RWJF and its specific interest areas.
- Individual candidates for receipt of award funds must be U.S. Citizens or permanent residents** at the time of application and must not be receiving support from other research fellowships/traineeships at the time they begin the program.
- Individual candidates for receipt of award funds cannot be related by blood or marriage to any Officer**** or Trustee of RWJF, or be a descendant of its founder, Robert Wood Johnson.

** Applicants who are permanent residents and not green card holders should contact the national program office before applying to determine whether they can satisfy the program's eligibility and documentation requirements.

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**** The Officers are the Chairman of the Board of Trustees; President and CEO; Chief of Staff; General Counsel; Secretary; Assistant Secretary; Treasurer; and Assistant Treasurer of the Foundation.

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DIVERSITY STATEMENT

Consistent with RWJF values, this program embraces diversity and inclusion across multiple dimensions, such as race, ethnicity, gender, age and disadvantaged socioeconomic status. We strongly encourage applications in support of individual candidates who will help us expand the perspectives and experiences we bring to our work. We believe that the more we include diverse perspectives and experiences in our work, the better we are able to help all Americans live healthier lives and get the care they need.

SELECTION CRITERIA

A committee consisting of RWJF staff and *New Connections* program staff from OMG Center for Collaborative Learning will review all proposals. RWJF does not provide individual critiques of proposals submitted. The following factors will be used in the selection process:

- Significance and relevance of the applicant's previous research experience.
- Evidence of solid research experience and interests.
- Fit with program goals of career development for diverse early- and midcareer researchers.
- Demonstrated skill set in relevant program team research and evaluation interests.
- Demonstrated or progress toward a successful peer-reviewed publication track record.
- Uniqueness of the applicant's personal and professional experiences. We seek *Junior Investigator* applicants who strive to develop new ways to contribute to the understanding of current health and health care challenges.
- The *Junior Investigator* applicant's demonstrated knowledge and experience with various research methodologies. We do not expect applicants to be content experts, but they should be able to lead a project with sufficient methodological understanding to produce new knowledge for RWJF and its program teams.
- Demonstrated ability and skill to complete the work in the specified time period.
- If the applicant is proposing a project that reflects a shift from his or her prior research agenda, the applicant should explain how that shift will advance his or her career.

USE OF GRANT FUNDS

Junior Investigators are eligible to receive a total grant award of up to \$100,000 for a period of 24 months. Grant funds may be used for project staff salaries, consultant fees, data collection and analysis, meetings, 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.

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The *New Connections* program guidelines specify the use of funds allowable under this program. Applicants should strive for efficient and appropriate use of funds as reflected in the proposed budget. The majority of funding should be used for the *Junior Investigator's* salary, travel, trainings, mentoring and costs associated with full participation in the *New Connections* program. Applicants must demonstrate a minimum 25 percent FTE commitment for 12 months for both years of funding. Time cannot be apportioned differently in the summer.

It is expected that by the end of grant, each applicant will be prepared to submit at least two manuscripts for publication. Grantees are also encouraged to propose and develop mechanisms for sharing knowledge gained with RWJF, and where applicable, relevant audiences in the field.

HOW TO APPLY

Applications for this solicitation must be submitted via the RWJF online system.

Visit www.rwjf.org/cfp/nci8jr and use the Apply Online link. If you have not already done so, you will be required to register at <http://my.rwjf.org> before you begin the application process.

There are two phases in the competitive proposal process:

Phase 1: Brief Proposals:

The first phase is the submission of a brief proposal that consists of the *Junior Investigator* applicant's research and professional background, personal statement, professional statement (that details the applicant's research goals and future research agenda), identification of a project mentor and other professional references. We will review brief proposals and invite selected applicants to move to the second stage of the application process.

Phase 2: Full Proposals: Selected Phase 1 applicants will be invited to submit a full proposal of no more than eight pages accompanied by a detailed budget, budget narrative, and additional information.

All applicants should log in to the system and familiarize themselves with online submission requirements well before the submission deadline. Staff may not be able to assist all applicants in the final 24 hours before the submission deadline. In fairness to all applicants, the program will not accept late submissions.

Please direct inquiries to:

Howard M. Walters, *project manager*

Phone: (215) 732-2200 ext. 276

Email: info@rwjf-newconnections.org

RWJF does not provide individual critiques of applications submitted.

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The deadline for receipt of brief proposals is **January 15, 2014 at 3:00 p.m. ET**. By **March 12, 2014** we will notify selected applicants that they have been invited to submit a full proposal. Information on full application submission requirements will be provided to selected applicants at that time. The deadline for receipt of full proposals is **3:00 p.m. ET on April 24, 2014**. We will notify Finalists of their status by **July 1, 2014**.

We strongly recommend that all applicants log in to <http://my.rwjf.org> and familiarize themselves with the online submission process and requirements well before the final submission deadline. Program staff may not be able to assist all applicants in the final 24 hours before the submission deadline. In fairness to all applicants, the program will not accept late proposals.

Optional Applicant Web Conference Calls

We will hold a Web conference call for applicants to provide additional information on the program's goals, to assist applicants with the Initial Application process, and to offer an opportunity for applicants to ask questions. The webinar is scheduled for **December 4, 2013 from 3:30–5:00 p.m. ET**.

For those invited to submit a full proposal, a second applicant Web conference will be held **March 26, 2014 from 3:30–5:00 p.m. ET**.

We highly encourage prospective applicants to participate in the Web conference call. Applicants can learn more about these Web conference calls and register for them by going to the program's website at www.rwjf-newconnections.org. Registration is required to participate.

PROGRAM DIRECTION

Direction and technical assistance for this program are provided by the OMG Center for Collaborative Learning, which serves as the national program office located at:

OMG Center for Collaborative Learning
1528 Walnut Street Suite 805
Philadelphia, PA 19102
Phone: (215) 732 - 2200 x276
Fax: (215) 732 - 8123
E-mail: info@rwjf-newconnections.org
Website: www.rwjf-newconnections.org

Responsible staff members at OMG Center are:

- Gerri Spilka, MArch, MA, *national program director*
- Edith G. Arrington, PhD, *deputy director*

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- Howard M. Walters, MSS, MLSP, project manager, New Connections: *Increasing Diversity of RWJF Programming*

Responsible staff members at the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation are:

- Catherine Malone, MBA, *program associate*
- Nancy Fishman, MPH, *senior program officer*
- Christine Phares, *program financial analyst*

KEY DATES AND DEADLINES

December 4, 2013 (3:30 p.m. ET)

Optional applicant Web conference.

January 15, 2014 (3 P.M. ET)

Deadline for receipt of brief proposals.*

March 12, 2014

Select applicants invited to submit full proposals.

July 1, 2014

Finalists notified of funding recommendations.

September 1, 2014

Grants initiated.

**All proposals must be submitted via my.rwjf.org only. Program staff may not be able to assist all applicants in the final 24 hours before the submission deadline. In fairness to all applicants, the program will not accept late or incomplete proposals.*

ABOUT THE ROBERT WOOD JOHNSON FOUNDATION

The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation focuses on the pressing health and health care issues facing our country. As the nation's largest philanthropy devoted exclusively to improving the health and health care of all Americans, we work with a diverse group of organizations and individuals to identify solutions and achieve comprehensive, measurable, and timely change.

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For more than 40 years we've brought experience, commitment and a rigorous, balanced approach to the problems that affect the health and health care of those we serve. When it comes to helping Americans lead healthier lives and get the care they need, we expect to make a difference in your lifetime.

For more information visit www.rwjf.org. Follow the Foundation on Twitter at www.rwjf.org/twitter or on Facebook at www.rwjf.org/facebook.

Sign up to receive email alerts on upcoming calls for proposals at <http://my.rwjf.org>.

Route 1 and College Road East
PO Box 2316
Princeton, NJ 08543-2316