

**2021 RWJF Culture of Health Prize
Frequently Asked Questions**

(Updated July 2020)

TABLE OF CONTENTS

General Prize FAQs 4

- How has the coronavirus pandemic affected the application process?4
- How many Prizes will be given?4
- What communities have won the Prize?4
- Is my community eligible to apply?4
- Are neighborhoods eligible to apply?.....5
- Are communities within U.S. territories eligible to apply?5
- What is a Native Hawaiian organization?5
- How many applications were received for the last round?5
- Is there a minimum or maximum population size for communities that apply?5
- Are you aiming for geographic diversity, or is it possible for multiple communities from one state to win?.....5
- What if a community submits more than one application?5
- Can the Prize be awarded to two communities with overlapping geographical boundaries?6
- Our community participated in a previous year’s competition but did not win and was not a finalist. May we reapply?.....6
- What communities are the past Prize finalists?6
- How is the RWJF Culture of Health Prize different from a grant?.....7
- Who should submit the application?7
- What are the responsibilities of the contact people on the application?7
- Will submissions be accepted after the deadline?7
- What is the connection between the Prize and the County Health Rankings & Roadmaps?8
- Will applicant communities be reviewed according to their County Health Rankings?8
- What is the connection between the Prize and Robert Wood Johnson Foundation’s grantmaking program?8
- How will applications be evaluated?8

Are past applicant communities evaluated differently?9

How will winners be selected?.....9

What is the process for selecting the winners?.....9

Who are the national experts that are involved in the Prize selection process?9

May we submit letters of support on behalf of our application?11

If my community wins, who gets the money?.....11

Can any eligible community win?.....11

What is expected of communities that win the RWJF Culture of Health Prize?11

How can we assess if our community is ready to apply for a Prize?12

We are interested in improving our application. Is there a way to find out why our community did not win last year?12

Will there be a Call for Applications for the RWJF Culture of Health Prize released for 2022?.....12

Whom may I contact for more information?12

Phase I FAQs 12

Do we need accomplishments in all four factor areas of the County Health Rankings model in order to apply?.....12

What are historically excluded populations as referenced in the Call for Applications?13

What are policy and systems changes as referenced in the Prize criteria?13

What if our community hasn't yet undertaken work in the area of policy and systems change?13

We are having a hard time deciding on just four accomplishments to feature. What do you suggest?13

Are communities expected to feature a COVID-19 related accomplishment?13

What type of data should a community be ready to submit with their application?14

Should the application include references, citations, charts, photos or hyperlinks to additional information?14

Our community uses a multi-sector collective impact initiative approach. How should we represent this in our Prize application?14

Communities benefit from many different types of partnerships and collaborations, including those with organizations located outside their geopolitical boundaries. May we consider such partnerships for our Phase I essay?14

What is the ideal number of partners to involve in a successful application?.....14

Do reviewers give preference to applications that emphasize well-established policies, programs, or strategies?15

Are Prize criteria ranked in order of importance?15

How are applicants notified if they are advancing to Phase II?15

Phase II FAQs 15

What will be required as part of the Phase II Application?	15
Should the Phase II essay include a statement of how we intend to use the Prize money should we win?.....	15
Is a community video required of applicants?	16
Could you recommend a quick, easy, and inexpensive way to create the Community Voices Entry video?.....	16
How long should the Community Voices Entry video be?.....	16
The videos featuring the winning communities on the RWJF website are very well done. Are these videos submitted by communities as part of their applications or are they produced for the announcement of winners?	16
Should the Community Voices Entry focus on the four accomplishments from the Phase I application or should we think more broadly?	16
Are past Prize winners available to provide advice or guidance to future applicants?.....	16
May the primary or alternate contact organizations serve as the Prize recipient and receive the \$25,000 award should the community win?	17
<i>Finalist & Site Visit FAQs</i>	<i>17</i>
When will the site visits take place?.....	17
How will site visits be scheduled?	17
How long will site visits last?	17
How many site visitors will participate?	17
What happens during a site visit?	17
Who organizes the site visit?	18
Who pays for the site visit?.....	18
May finalist communities offer gifts to site visitors?.....	18
How will we be notified if we have won the Prize?.....	18
What happens if we win?	18
When may we share the good news with our community?.....	19
Is there support to help winners celebrate with the local community?	19
What happens after the celebrations?	19

General Prize FAQs

How has the coronavirus pandemic affected the application process?

The health and safety of communities and the program's partners are a priority and will be considered should the selection process be affected by the uncertainties that come with a pandemic.

How many Prizes will be given?

Up to ten \$25,000 Prizes can be awarded from the 2021 finalists. Each applicant community will designate a local U.S. governmental entity or tax exempt public charity operating in its community to accept the Prize funds on the community's behalf, should they win.

What communities have won the Prize?

A list of Prize-winning communities can be found in the 2021 Call for Applications and at www.rwjf.org/prize.

The 2020 Prize-winning communities will be selected from this group of eight 2020 Prize finalists and announced in 2021.

2020 Prize finalist communities are:

- Addison, IL
- Alamosa County, CO
- Chickaloon Native Village (AK)
- Douglas County, KS
- Drew, MS
- National City, CA
- Tulsa County, OK
- Worcester, MA

Is my community eligible to apply?

The RWJF Culture of Health Prize honors **geographically defined jurisdictions** within the United States* that fall into one of the following categories:

- County, parish, city, town, village, borough, or other municipality with a publicly elected governing body
- Federally recognized tribe or a state-designated Indian reservation
- Native Hawaiian organization serving and representing the interests of Native Hawaiians in Hawaii
- Region defined as geographically contiguous municipalities, counties, and/or reservations

* Communities within U.S. territories are welcome to apply. Communities in places that may have unique governance structures (such as U.S. territories, Alaska, and Hawaii) should contact the Prize program with eligibility questions well in advance of the application deadline.

For the purposes of applying, a "publicly elected governing body" refers to a general purpose body that is chosen through publicly-held elections and has law making authority over a municipality. For example,

this definition would include unincorporated municipalities with elected councils but excludes community boards with appointed members, school districts, parks districts, or other special districts. Submissions representing the work of a single organization or initiative will not be considered. Neighborhoods and states are not eligible to apply.

Are neighborhoods eligible to apply?

Neighborhoods are not eligible to apply. While neighborhoods may not apply on their own, the work of neighborhoods absolutely can be featured as part of the broader efforts being undertaken in towns and cities.

Are communities within U.S. territories eligible to apply?

Yes. Communities within the territories administered by the United States are welcome to apply including, but not limited to, American Samoa, Federated States of Micronesia, Guam, Marshall Islands, Northern Mariana Islands, Palau, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

What is a Native Hawaiian organization?

"Native Hawaiian" means any individual who is a citizen of the United States and a descendant of the aboriginal people who, prior to 1778, occupied and exercised sovereignty in the area that now comprises the State of Hawaii, as evidenced by (A) genealogical records; (B) Kupuna (elders) or Kamaaina (long-term community residents) verification; or (C) certified birth records.

Native Hawaiian organization means a private nonprofit organization that (A) serves the interests of Native Hawaiians; (B) has Native Hawaiians in substantive and policymaking positions within the organization; and (C) is recognized by the Governor of Hawaii for the purpose of planning, conducting, or administering programs (or portions of programs) for the benefit of Native Hawaiians. See, e.g. [U.S. Code, Title 20, Section 7517](#).

How many applications were received for the last round?

For the 2020 competition, 136 applications were received.

Is there a minimum or maximum population size for communities that apply?

No. The program invites applications from all communities that meet the eligibility requirements regardless of population size.

Are you aiming for geographic diversity, or is it possible for multiple communities from one state to win?

Our primary goal is to recognize communities that are working on the forefront of advancing health, opportunity, and equity for all, as exemplified by the six Prize criteria. Thus, multiple communities from the same state can apply and win. Each applicant will be reviewed individually against the six Prize criteria, not in relation to other applicants or winners located in similar geographic areas.

What if a community submits more than one application?

Collaboration within communities is strongly encouraged, and reviewers will look favorably on applicants that have done the legwork to bring diverse organizations and partnerships together for a

single Phase I submission. In the event there are multiple applications from one community and/or overlapping jurisdictions, each application will be reviewed independently. If two or more applications from the same community are advanced to Phase II, applicants will be encouraged to work together to submit one Phase II application on behalf of the whole community.

Can the Prize be awarded to two communities with overlapping geographical boundaries?

The Prize is a community-wide award based on a geographical jurisdiction, and it is possible that the Prize can be awarded to two communities with overlapping geographical boundaries if both communities exemplify the Prize criteria, have unique stories and lessons to share, and are engaged in work that fully reflects the submission’s eligibility category. For example, a county application that includes a Prize-winning city within its boundaries would be eligible to win for their accomplishments at the county-wide level. A community that is fully geographically encompassed by a larger Prize-winning jurisdiction (e.g., a city within a winning county, or a county within a winning region) is eligible if the larger Prize-winning jurisdiction did not feature the accomplishments of the smaller jurisdiction prominently in the inaugural Prize-winning application.

Our community participated in a previous year’s competition but did not win and was not a finalist. May we reapply?

Yes. Past applicants are eligible and encouraged to reapply, with the exception of 2020 finalist communities and all past Prize-winning communities. Prize-winning communities can only receive the Prize once; once they win, they become part of the ongoing Prize Alumni Network. (A list of Prize-winning communities can be found in the 2021 Call for Applications and at www.rwjf.org/prize.)

What communities are the past Prize finalists?

Past finalist communities by year:

2019

- Carrollton, GA
- Del Norte County & Tribal Lands, CA
- Fishers, IN
- Jersey City, NJ
- Lake Village, AR
- Perth Amboy, NJ
- Vista, CA

2017

- Bernalillo County, NM
- Ingham County, MI
- Nogales, AZ

2018

- Bethlehem, PA
- Cincinnati, OH
- Huntington, WV
- Lyon County, NV
- Nashville, TN
- Ruston, LA

2016

- Clayton County, GA
- Grand Rapids, MI
- New Haven, CT
- Oakland, CA
- Philadelphia, PA
- Rancho Cucamonga, CA
- Trenton, NJ
- Tulsa County, OK
- White Mountain Apache Tribe (AZ)

2015

- El Paso County, TX
- Itta Bena, MS
- Marin City, CA
- Quad Cities Region, IA/IL
- Lancaster County, PA
- Santa Clara County, CA
- Sonoma County, CA

2013

- Indianola, MS
- Richmond, CA
- Lucas County, OH
- Scott County, IN
- Somerville, MA

2014

- Bexar County, TX
- Canton, OH
- East Baton Rouge Parish, LA
- Franklin County, ME
- Sitka, AK
- Van Buren County, IA

How is the RWJF Culture of Health Prize different from a grant?

The Prize recognizes and celebrates communities' successes – what they already have achieved – whereas grants typically provide funding tied to specific, time-limited goals and objectives aimed at the future. The Prize is a cash award, and community partners can decide together how to use the funds to benefit the community; budget reports to the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) or the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute (UWPHI) on Prize expenditures are not required.

Who should submit the application?

The Prize recognizes whole communities. Successful applicants think and act beyond their own individual organizations and initiatives. The application should reflect the work of the whole community, not only one organization or initiative. Community members should select two people, preferably from two different organizations or entities, to serve as contacts on the application.

What are the responsibilities of the contact people on the application?

The contact people listed in the community's Prize application (preferably representing two different organizations or entities to demonstrate a collaborative application), are responsible for ensuring the submission is complete; incomplete applications will be disqualified. **Both contacts will receive all communications about a community's Prize application.** These communications include, but are not limited to, notifications about whether a community has been selected to advance from Phase I to Phase II of the selection process, and if selected for Phase II, whether a community has been selected as a finalist and invited to receive a site visit. The primary contact often serves as the local contact person for site visits; however, this can be delegated to another person or organization.

Will submissions be accepted after the deadline?

To be accepted, applicants must submit completed proposals by the time and date of the deadline. To be fair to all who submit proposals on time, this deadline is strictly enforced. All applicants should log in to my.rwjf.org and familiarize themselves with the application process and the online submission requirements well in advance of the submission deadline. Applicants are also encouraged to begin the process early to allow adequate time to collaborate with community partners. The submission process

may be substantially slower when many users are simultaneously trying to submit their applications. Staff may not be able to assist all applicants in the final 24 hours before the submission deadline. Reasons such as lack of Internet connectivity, applicant server problems, confusion about time of deadline, or difficulty working with partners, are not grounds for exceptions.

What is the connection between the Prize and the County Health Rankings & Roadmaps?

The RWJF Culture of Health Prize was originally conceived as part of the County Health Rankings & Roadmaps program (www.countyhealthrankings.org), a collaboration between RWJF and the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute (UWPHI). Based on a [model of population health improvement](#), the County Health Rankings help communities see where they are doing well and where there are opportunities to improve across many factors that influence health and well-being – including health behaviors, clinical care, social and economic factors, and the physical environment. The County Health Rankings & Roadmaps are a call to action – designed to motivate and equip community leaders to work together to build a Culture of Health. Recognizing that every community is on a unique journey toward improving health, opportunity, and equity, and that success stories are as diverse as our nation’s populations, the RWJF Culture of Health Prize was established to shine a light on communities that are on the leading edge of building a Culture of Health and to help other communities learn from their successes and challenges.

Will applicant communities be reviewed according to their County Health Rankings?

The Prize and its selection criteria are informed by the same [model of population health improvement](#) that underpins the County Health Rankings. This model is referenced in the first Prize criterion as a helpful framework for understanding the many factors that affect community health. However, selection criteria for the Prize are completely independent of use of the model and of health outcomes and health factor rankings. Communities will be reviewed on their accomplishments and how well they meet the six Prize criteria – not where they fall in the County Health Rankings.

What is the connection between the Prize and Robert Wood Johnson Foundation’s grantmaking program?

The Prize is open to all communities, including those that have and have not previously received grants from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. Communities will be judged, using the six Prize criteria, on what they have accomplished relative to available resources, regardless of the funding source.

How will applications be evaluated?

The six Prize criteria (see 2021 Call for Applications pp. 6-7) will drive the judging throughout the selection process, from Phase I through the site visits. Reviewers are particularly interested in the extent to which accomplishments reflect the first three criteria, which are considered foundational to building a Culture of Health. Reviewers will not only review each criterion individually but will also consider how the community creates momentum towards positive, inclusive, equitable and lasting change with an eye towards how the community has demonstrated creativity and determination in addressing a wide range of community improvement priorities.

Are past applicant communities evaluated differently?

All applicants are evaluated according to the six Prize criteria and based on their current application materials. Past Phase I and Phase II applicants and past finalist communities are not assessed differently from all other applicants.

How will winners be selected?

Communities will advance from Phase I to Phase II based on how well their four accomplishments illustrate the six Prize criteria with a particular emphasis on the first three criteria: (1) defining health in the broadest possible terms, (2) committing to sustainable systems changes and policy-oriented long-term solutions, and (3) creating conditions that give everyone a fair and just opportunity to reach their best possible health. Advancing from Phase II to finalist status will also be based on a review of the application materials (written materials and the Community Voices Entry video) according to how well the community as a whole has embraced all six Prize criteria. Winners will be selected based on a combination of Phase I and II materials and the face-to-face site visit. During the site visit, communities may also feature accomplishments and information beyond what was included in the written application that supports how they are improving health, opportunity, and equity in their community in line with the Prize criteria.

What is the process for selecting the winners?

Phase I and Phase II applications will be evaluated by a panel of reviewers that include staff from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute, and the Prize National Advisory Group, which is comprised of experts in building healthy, equitable communities from a variety of organizations across the nation. This process will determine the communities selected for a site visit. Site visitors also include staff from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute, our partner organization Healthy Places by Design, and the Prize National Advisory Group. Site visitors will rate each community visited based on the six Prize criteria. The final slate of winning communities will be approved by RWJF.

Who are the national experts that are involved in the Prize selection process?

The 2020 Prize National Advisory Group members include:

- John Auerbach, MBA, *president / CEO*, Trust for America's Health
- Bettina Byrd-Giles, MA.Ed, *CEO*, The Bethesda Life Center, Inc.
- Frank Castelblanco, DNP, RN, *chair – continuing professional development*, Mountain Area Health Education Center
- Romi Hall, MPH, *director*, NeighborWorks America
- Ben Hecht, JD, *president / CEO*, Living Cities
- Justin Kii Huenemann, MA, *president / CEO*, Notah Begay III Foundation
- Letetia Daniels Jackson, BBA, *president / CEO*, Tandeka, LLC
- Janhavi Kirtane, MBA, *general manager / staff vice president*, CareMore Health System
- Paul Lindberg, JD, *collective impact health specialist*, Partnership of United Way of the Columbia Gorge and Providence Hood River Hospital
- Marcus Littles, MPA, *senior partner*, Frontline Solutions
- Xavier Morales, PHD, MRP, *executive director*, Praxis Project

- Jessica Mulcahy, MA, *director*, NeighborWorks America
- Khanh Nguyen, JD, *senior program officer*, The Colorado Health Foundation
- Joe Reardon, JD, *president / CEO*, Greater Kansas City Chamber of Commerce
- Elizabeth Yeampierre, JD, *executive director*, UPROSE

National experts (and their affiliation at the time) involved in the past include:

- David G. Altman, PhD, *executive vice president, research, innovation, and product development*, Center for Creative Leadership
- Catherine M. Baase, MD, *global director, health services*, The Dow Chemical Company
- Georges C. Benjamin, MD, FACP, FACEP(E), *executive director*, American Public Health Association
- David Chase, BA, *vice president of national outreach*, Small Business Majority
- Antony Chiang, JD, *president*, Empire Health Foundation
- Colby Dailey, MA, *managing director*, Build Healthy Places Network
- Kitty Hsu Dana, MBA, *vice president, community impact, health*, United Way Worldwide
- Crystal Echo Hawk, MA, *president / CEO*, Echo Hawk Consulting
- Ginny Ehrlich, MPH, D Ed, *former CEO, Clinton Health Matters initiative*, Clinton Foundation
- Lori Freeman, MBA, *chief executive officer*, Association of Maternal Child Health Programs
- Kristin Giantris, MPA, *managing director – consulting*, Nonprofit Finance Fund
- Maeghan Gilmore, MPH, *program director – county solutions & innovation*, National Association of Counties
- Lavastian Glenn, BA, *program officer*, Mary Reynolds Babcock Foundation
- Phillip González, MA, *program director*, Community Catalyst
- Patricia Nez Henderson, MD, *program director*, Black Hills Center for American Indian Health
- Necole S. Irvin, JD, MPH, *principal*, Blackwood Advisors
- Chris Kabel, MPH, *senior program officer*, The Kresge Foundation
- Mary Kramer, MA, *former Iowa State senator and former U.S. ambassador to Barbados*
- Sanne Magnost, MD, PhD, *president / CEO*, Institute for Clinical Systems Improvement
- Vilma Martínez-Domínguez, BS, *community development director*, City of Lawrence, Mayor’s Liaison to the Mayor’s Health Task Force
- Judith Monroe, MD, *director*, Office for State, Tribal, Local, and Territorial Support, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
- Marcie Parkhurst, MCP, *associate director*, FSG
- Susan Patterson, BA, *program director*, Charlotte, NC, Knight Foundation
- Mary Pittman, DrPH, *president / CEO*, Public Health Institute
- Kalpana Ramiah, DrPH, MSc, *director of research*, America’s Essential Hospitals
- Yanique Redwood, PhD, MPH, *president / CEO*, Consumer Health Foundation
- Lillian Rivera, RN, MSN, PhD, *administrator*, Florida Department of Health in Miami-Dade County
- Eduardo Sánchez, MD, MPH, FAAFP, *chief medical officer – prevention, chief – center for health metrics and evaluation*, American Heart Association
- Tim Size, MBA, *executive director*, Rural Wisconsin Health Cooperative
- Allen J. Smart, MPH, MA, *project director – rural philanthropy*, Campbell University
- Brian Smedley, PhD, *vice president and director*, Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies
- Marion Standish, JD, *director of community health*, The California Endowment
- David Stone, PhD, *associate professor of public health*, Northern Illinois University

- Sarah Strunk, MHA, *executive director*, Active Living by Design
- Kathy Sykes, MA, *senior advisor, aging initiative*, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
- Julie Trocchio, RN, BSN, MS, *senior director, community benefit and continuing care*, Catholic Health Association
- Elizabeth M. Walker Romero, MS, *senior director*, Association of State and Territorial Health Officials
- Tracy Wiedt, MPH, *strategic director for healthy communities*, American Cancer Society
- David R. Williams, PhD, MPH, *Florence and Laura Norman professor of public health*, Harvard School of Public Health
- Valarie Wilson, MPA, *executive director*, The Atlanta Beltline Partnership

May we submit letters of support on behalf of our application?

No supplementary materials, including letters of support, will be accepted, but we strongly encourage you to highlight your partners and supporters in your application materials. There will be additional opportunities to directly feature residents and partners in your Community Voices Entry video and/or site visit should you advance in the Prize selection process.

If my community wins, who gets the money?

During Phase II, each applicant community will be required to designate a local U.S. governmental entity or tax exempt public charity operating in its community to accept the \$25,000 Prize on the community's behalf, should they win. To be eligible, the recommended Prize recipient must be a local U.S. governmental entity, including, but not limited to, state universities, or a tax exempt entity under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code (the "Code") and classified as other than a private foundation or Type III supporting organization under section 509 of the Code. RWJF will review the proposed recipients to make sure the organization meets this criteria and, in certain instances, it may be necessary to designate a different recipient. Community partners can decide together how to use the funds to benefit the community; budget reports to RWJF or UWPHI on Prize expenditures are not required.

Can any eligible community win?

Reviewers will evaluate each applicant individually, seeking communities that exemplify the six Prize criteria in relation to each community's unique challenges, opportunities and resources.

However, as a steward of private resources that must be used in the public's interest, RWJF reserves the right to disqualify a community or its designated Prize recipient should RWJF learn of circumstances involving that community or designated Prize recipient that conflict, in fact or in spirit, with RWJF's goals or values.

What is expected of communities that win the RWJF Culture of Health Prize?

Based on their demonstrated capacity for and dedication to creating lasting change, representatives from winning communities will have opportunities to serve as ambassadors for building a Culture of Health across America – sharing their successes, learning from others, and networking locally, regionally, and nationally. This may be accomplished via invitations to interview with media; present at conferences or webinars; serve on national advisory groups; or participate in other avenues yet to be determined. Prize winning communities are also invited to engage in ongoing learning and networking opportunities

through the Prize Alumni Network. Winners will work closely with RWJF and UWPHI to prepare for these opportunities.

How can we assess if our community is ready to apply for a Prize?

The Prize criteria are core to the program and serve as the lens to evaluate applications throughout the selection process. Communities are encouraged to use the criteria as a general resource for community improvement action, as well as a tool for gauging readiness for applying for the Prize.

We are interested in improving our application. Is there a way to find out why our community did not win last year?

Due to the large volume of applications received, the program is unable to provide feedback to all communities about their past applications. Applicants that advance to Phase II and are not selected as finalists may request individualized written feedback about how their application did or did not reflect the six Prize criteria. Finalists that advance to the Site Visit Phase but do not win a Prize can receive individualized feedback via conference call at their request. Communities may also conduct a self-assessment of their application using the six Prize criteria found in the Call for Applications. Additional tools that can assist your community with advancing your work to improve health and well-being include the County Health Rankings & Roadmaps [Action Center](#) and [What Works for Health](#).

Will there be a Call for Applications for the RWJF Culture of Health Prize released for 2022?

The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation has an enduring commitment to the RWJF Culture of Health Prize and anticipates opportunities for a 2022 Prize program; the timing and selection process is uncertain.

Whom may I contact for more information?

For more information on the RWJF Culture of Health Prize, please contact: Erin Schulten, Program Manager, RWJF Culture of Health Prize, email: info@cohprize.wisc.edu.

Phase I FAQs

Do we need accomplishments in all four factor areas of the County Health Rankings model in order to apply?

There is not a specific requirement for one accomplishment per health factor; however, applicants are encouraged to elevate accomplishments that best exemplify the Prize criteria and as such are strongly encouraged to consider how work across their community reflects a balanced portfolio across the multiple determinants of health, for example as reflected in the [County Health Rankings](#) model. While policies, programs, and strategies that support healthy eating, physical activity, and other health behaviors are important, they are only one piece of the puzzle. Standing alone, these will not result in a competitive application. Because of their strong influence on health outcomes, reviewers have particular interest in accomplishments targeting action to improve the social and economic factors (i.e., education, employment, income, family & social support, community safety). Applicants that advance to Phase II of the competition will be asked to provide additional information about how they are working across the multiple determinants of health.

What are historically excluded populations as referenced in the Call for Applications?

Residents who have been historically excluded from opportunities refers to those “who have often suffered discrimination or been excluded or marginalized from society and the health-promoting resources it has to offer. . . Examples of historically excluded/marginalized or disadvantaged groups include—but are not limited to—people of color; people living in poverty, particularly across generations; religious minorities; people with physical or mental disabilities; LGBTQ persons; and women.” (Definition from: [What Is Health Equity? And What Difference Does a Definition Make?](#), Braveman et al., 2017, p. 4.)

What are policy and systems changes as referenced in the Prize criteria?

In general, these types of changes represent a shift from thinking about improving individual health to thinking about how to improve health, opportunity, and equity at a population level by making healthy choices the easy choice and by creating conditions that provide opportunities for all community residents to be their healthiest. Policy change includes the passing of laws, ordinances, resolutions, mandates, regulations, or rules; system change involves change made to the rules or processes within an organization or the rules or processes that guide how different organizations and groups work together. Policy change can also enable successful programs to be replicated and/or funded. These changes may target many different kinds and sizes of populations. For example, policy changes in education could affect students and their families in one school, a whole school district, a county, or a state. Successful applicants tend to feature a strategic mix of policy, programmatic, and systems changes that are designed to last.

What if our community hasn't yet undertaken work in the area of policy and systems change?

This work is difficult – but it's crucial for improving population health. Communities that have not yet done this type of work may not yet be competitive for the Prize, but we encourage you to explore the wide variety of resources available to communities in this area, including the County Health Rankings & Roadmaps [Action Center](#) and [What Works for Health](#).

We are having a hard time deciding on just four accomplishments to feature. What do you suggest?

There is no one best way to determine which accomplishments to feature in your application, but we encourage community members to collaborate on these decisions and keep the six Prize criteria top of mind during your deliberations. An accomplishment may be an individual policy, program, or strategy, or an integrated or closely related collection of policies, programs, or strategies. Taken together, your four accomplishments should reflect work that goes beyond any single intervention and showcases progress toward better health, opportunity, and equity. Applicants should describe how each accomplishment relates to identified community challenges and how it may impact historically excluded populations or geographic areas in the community. Communities that move to Phase II will have the opportunity to showcase additional information about their accomplishments and how they are meeting all six Prize criteria.

Are communities expected to feature a COVID-19 related accomplishment?

The coronavirus pandemic has highlighted existing inequities. Building a Culture of Health recognizes community-wide efforts to work collectively to create conditions to ensure all residents have a fair and just opportunity for health. Given the Prize recognizes the accomplishments made in communities, that we are in the midst of the novel coronavirus response as a nation, and that not every community is

impacted the same by the novel coronavirus, there is no expectation that you feature a COVID-19 related accomplishment. It is expected that communities identify how they are addressing a fair and just opportunity to health.

What type of data should a community be ready to submit with their application?

In your Phase I application essay, we encourage communities to include qualitative and quantitative process measures, outcome data, and stories of success that you are most proud of and that best demonstrate how your community's efforts align with the Prize criteria. We are not seeking reports or studies in the Phase I application. As an applicant community is invited to advance in the Prize competition from Phase I to Phase II and the site visit, there are increasing opportunities to share outcome data with the reviewers.

Should the application include references, citations, charts, photos or hyperlinks to additional information?

Information that you want to convey to reviewers should be directly included in the content of the five-page essay. References, citations, charts, photos, or hyperlinks to additional information are not required for this submission and are not encouraged.

Our community uses a multi-sector collective impact initiative approach. How should we represent this in our Prize application?

One or more of your collective impact accomplishments could be featured in the four accomplishments required in the Phase I application for the Prize. The five key elements of [collective impact](#) are also woven into the six Prize criteria, so use your successes in collective impact to tell us how you have done your work. For example, shared measurement systems in collective impact can be an integral part of Prize Criterion #6—Measuring and sharing progress and results.

Communities benefit from many different types of partnerships and collaborations, including those with organizations located outside their geopolitical boundaries. May we consider such partnerships for our Phase I essay?

Yes. Community applicants are encouraged to illustrate the depth and breadth of collaborations and partnerships within and beyond their communities. Please keep in mind, however, that reviewers seek to honor communities that are driving the process from within. Communities should be able to demonstrate an internal force and passion for community health improvement that is independent of external contributions.

What is the ideal number of partners to involve in a successful application?

There is no ideal number or minimum number of partners to include. Rather, the application should address how partners across sectors are collaborating and working together toward a shared goal of improving health, opportunity, and equity across the community, and how this work represents the six Prize criteria. References to partnership and collaboration in the Prize criteria are broadly defined and may include both formal and informal relationships between community members, organizations, and sectors.

Do reviewers give preference to applications that emphasize well-established policies, programs, or strategies?

Applicant communities are encouraged to demonstrate a balanced approach to community improvement that may feature well-established accomplishments as well as newly implemented efforts, selecting four that collectively best exemplify the six Prize criteria. **Please note, however, that planning and convening processes such as coalition development, community health assessments, or improvement plans do not qualify as “accomplishments” for this submission.** This type of foundational work can be featured in the introduction of your Phase I essay.

Are Prize criteria ranked in order of importance?

The six Prize criteria together drive the RWJF Culture of Health Prize competition from beginning to end; all play a vital role in selection of winners. That said, special consideration is given to the first three criteria throughout all stages of the review process: (1) defining health in the broadest possible terms; (2) committing to sustainable systems changes and policy-oriented long-term solutions; and (3) creating conditions that give everyone a fair and just opportunity to reach their best possible health.

How are applicants notified if they are advancing to Phase II?

The two contact people listed in the application will be notified by email. Those advancing to Phase II will receive an invitation with detailed instructions about requirements and deadlines for the next stage of the process.

Phase II FAQs

What will be required as part of the Phase II Application?

For Phase II, invited community applicants will:

- Submit a second essay to provide reviewers with additional information about community improvement efforts, with a focus on *what* they have done and *how* they have done it, including how the community is working across all six Prize criteria.
- Prepare a brief four-minute video, the Community Voices Entry, that brings the community's story to life through the voices of its residents.
- Draft a site visit itinerary to give reviewers a sense of what they might see and who they might meet should the community be selected as a finalist.
- Designate a local governmental entity or tax exempt public charity within the community to accept the \$25,000 Prize on the community's behalf, should their community win.

Should the Phase II essay include a statement of how we intend to use the Prize money should we win?

No. The RWJF Culture of Health Prize offers a cash prize of \$25,000 to each winning community. There is no need or expectation for applicant communities to state their intentions about how the cash prize will be used anywhere in application materials.

Is a community video required of applicants?

Yes, but only for those communities that are selected to advance to Phase II of the selection process. The Community Voices Entry video is intended to supplement your written application by bringing your community's story to life with the voices of its residents through video. Reviewers' assessments of your Community Voices Entry will be based on content rather than production quality, so there is no need to have professional narration or to have the video professionally edited.

Could you recommend a quick, easy, and inexpensive way to create the Community Voices Entry video?

To produce the Community Voices Entry video, we strongly urge you to utilize the technology available to you and tap into your community's existing resources (for example: local media, high school video clubs, local businesses, or youth organizations). We also encourage you to rely on economical, user-friendly, online video-production platforms, such as [Animoto.com](https://www.animoto.com/), [Windows Photos](https://www.windowsphotos.com/), [iMovie](https://www.imovie.com/), or even your smartphone! There are also other user-friendly platforms that offer services for free or at a nominal cost.

How long should the Community Voices Entry video be?

The Community Voices Entry video may be up to four minutes (240 seconds) in length.

The videos featuring the winning communities on the RWJF website are very well done. Are these videos submitted by communities as part of their applications or are they produced for the announcement of winners?

The [featured videos](#) are produced by RWJF following winner selection; these videos were NOT submitted by applicant communities. For the Phase II Community Voices Entry video submission, communities are encouraged to make use of user-friendly and low-cost options such as those described in the previous question.

Should the Community Voices Entry focus on the four accomplishments from the Phase I application or should we think more broadly?

The Community Voices Entry video is meant to highlight the voices of community residents, and should expand on, rather than repeat, information you have already provided in your Phase I and II essays. The Community Voices Entry should feature interviews from at least two community residents directly and most affected by local challenges and solutions highlighted in your Phase I and Phase II application. Please consider including community residents who have been historically excluded from opportunities and who now participate in problem solving. Interviewees are asked to reflect on and discuss the community's improvement journey from their own perspectives, using prompts provided in the application instructions.

Are past Prize winners available to provide advice or guidance to future applicants?

As ambassadors for the Prize, RWJF Culture of Health Prize winners share a desire to spread community improvement efforts throughout the nation, a role which includes but is not limited to discussing their work at local, regional, state, and national forums. Communities are encouraged to learn about the winners through the videos and content in the [Prize Gallery](#), rather than contacting winners directly.

May the primary or alternate contact organizations serve as the Prize recipient and receive the \$25,000 award should the community win?

Yes. The primary or alternate contact organizations may also serve as the Prize recipient so long as the organization satisfies the necessary requirements (i.e., a local U.S. governmental entity, including, but not limited to, state universities, or a tax exempt entity under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code (the "Code") and classified as other than a private foundation or Type III supporting organization under section 509 of the Code).

Finalist & Site Visit FAQs

When will the site visits take place?

Site visits for the 2021 Prize competition are planned to take place in the spring of 2021.

How will site visits be scheduled?

If your community is selected as a finalist, you will be contacted by RWJF Culture of Health Prize staff at UWPHI, who will ask you to complete a questionnaire (generally within three to five business days of notification) to determine which of the possible site visit dates will work for your community.

How long will site visits last?

Site visitors will be in your community for about 24 hours. The visit itself will take place over two days, typically beginning in the early afternoon of the first day and ending around noon on the second.

How many site visitors will participate?

Each RWJF Culture of Health Prize site visit team will typically have five members. Site visitors will represent the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute, and members of the Prize National Advisory Group, which is comprised of experts in building healthy communities from a variety of organizations across the nation.

What happens during a site visit?

The site visit is an opportunity for finalist communities to showcase their accomplishments and bring life and voice to the Phase I and II submissions. Site visits typically include the following three elements:

Community Tour

The Community Tour (3 ½ hours) is an opportunity for community members to provide site visitors with a first-hand introduction to the people, places, policies, systems and environmental changes that make the community unique and that have played a prominent role in the community's health improvement story.

Roundtable Conversation: Perspectives on Community Change

The roundtable conversation (2 hours) is an opportunity to introduce site visitors to six formal and informal community leaders to discuss the history of health improvement in the

community, visions for the future, driving forces behind community efforts, challenges faced, how the community measures progress, and how all the pieces fit together.

Community Conversation

The community conversation (3 hours) convenes a broader group of approximately 20 community participants to discuss diverse perspectives about the community's collective efforts to improve health, opportunity, and equity, and to share stories, reflections, and insights that speak to how the six Prize criteria are reflected in their collective work.

More specific guidance and resources will be available for those invited to participate in the site visit phase of the competition.

Who organizes the site visit?

The community will be asked to select two contact people to communicate with RWJF Culture of Health Prize staff at UWPHI during the site visit phase. These individuals will provide leadership for organizing the three elements of the site visit (Community Tour, Roundtable Conversation, and Community Conversation) and will coordinate all logistics with the Prize staff.

Who pays for the site visit?

To acknowledge the time and effort it takes to host a site visit, the Prize program offers finalist communities a total site visit payment of \$4,000. A minor portion of this payment is intended to cover any food, venue, or transportation costs associated with the site visit, which the community will arrange. All travel expenses for the RWJF Culture of Health Prize site visit team will be covered by the Prize program.

May finalist communities offer gifts to site visitors?

To be fair across all finalist communities, there is no need to provide gifts or promotional materials for site visitors. Site visitors find it helpful, though, to receive brief written materials that have been developed for purposes other than the site visit to highlight and build upon what they see and hear during the visit.

How will we be notified if we have won the Prize?

The site visit contacts designated by your community will be notified by phone and/or email as to whether they have won the Prize. Additional information on the timing of this notification will be provided during the site visit.

What happens if we win?

Lots! RWJF and UWPHI will work collaboratively with you to help prepare for a national event and media outreach around the announcement of the Prize winners. Here are a few of the initial activities you can anticipate:

- Your community will be assigned a communications liaison from the RWJF communications team. This person's responsibility is to coordinate all communications and media activities for your community.
- You will work with the communications liaison to (a) prepare media releases and outreach to media, policymakers and other audiences and (b) identify what kind of communications

materials would be useful to you in sharing your community's story. For example, a video crew, a writer, or a photographer may work with you to help tell your story.

- You will identify which members of your community will attend the national RWJF Culture of Health Prize Celebration, and RWJF will fund travel for several members of your community to attend the event.
- During the Celebration, community members in attendance will play a variety of roles, including accepting the Prize on the community's behalf, sharing your successes, and, in some cases, speaking to media representatives. This event will provide excellent opportunities for learning and networking through engagement with current and past Prize-winning communities, RWJF and UWPHI leadership and staff, and other invited guests.

When may we share the good news with our community?

You may share the news with your community after the national unveiling of winners. This means that your good news will be embargoed (that is, not allowed to be shared) until that time. Under the terms of the embargo, you may share the news with key people involved in your community improvement efforts, but not to the general public or to any media. Between learning of your good news and the national unveiling of winners, communications materials will be developed for Prize-winning communities, and preparations will be made for the official announcement.

Is there support to help winners celebrate with the local community?

We encourage winners to capitalize on the momentum of the national announcement by planning a local opportunity to "bring the Prize home" and engage partners and community members in celebrating accomplishments. The Prize program will provide a stipend to support a celebration opportunity. Local celebration opportunities can happen any time *after* the national announcement of Prize winners and within one year of the announcement. At Prize-winning communities' request, and depending on availability, a representative from RWJF, UWPHI, and/or the Prize National Advisory Group may be able to participate in your local opportunity to celebrate the Prize win.

What happens after the celebrations?

To raise awareness and inspire locally driven change across the country, winning communities' success stories will also be shared broadly in a variety of ways, which may include a combination of:

- Video storytelling;
- Social, broadcast and print products;
- Local and national media coverage;
- Web and online platform postings;
- Meeting and conference presentations; and
- Visits with policymakers.

Winning community leaders will become part of the 600+ person strong Prize Alumni Network and may receive invitations to future Prize events, to learning and sharing opportunities to support their ongoing community improvement efforts, and to other occasions to serve as ambassadors for building a national Culture of Health.