

**Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)  
Health Policy Research Scholars (HPRS) Program**  
Version 1/15/2020

**COMMONLY USED ABBREVIATIONS**

**CFA:** Call for Applications

**HPRS:** Health Policy Research Scholars

**NPC:** National Program Center. The NPC for HPRS is the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health

**HPRS PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY**

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

HPRS will enroll up to 60 second and third year pre-doctoral scholars (as of September 2020) from any research-focused disciplines who are interested in and have an application to health policy research. Specifically, we aim to recruit doctoral students from a variety of disciplines (e.g., urban planning, health, economics, ethnography, education, social work, political science, etc.) who are training to be researchers.

**Which underrepresented and marginalized populations are eligible?**

Examples of eligible individuals from underrepresented populations and/or marginalized backgrounds include, but are not limited to, first-generation college graduates, individuals from lower socioeconomic backgrounds, individuals from racial and ethnic groups underrepresented in doctoral programs, and individuals with disabilities. The application includes space for applicants to describe how they are from underrepresented populations and/or disadvantaged backgrounds. If you are unsure of your eligibility, please contact the NPC.

**Which degrees does HPRS consider clinical degrees?**

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

**Are women considered underrepresented?**

The determination of whether a particular demographic is underrepresented will depend on the field of study. In general, women are not considered underrepresented in public health and social science doctoral programs, but for example, are underrepresented in computer science.

**Is HPRS using the number of credits to determine if the applicant is in their second or third doctoral year?**

HPRS participants must be full time students entering their 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> year as of September 2020. Applicants must be enrolled in a program that is offered full-time. Applicants who are in a part-time doctoral program, but taking additional credits that make be similar to a credit load for full time students, are not considered full-time.

**Is there an alternative program for 1<sup>st</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> year doctoral students?**

Not at this time.

**Is there an age requirement or limit?**

Yes. Full time doctoral students must be at least 21 years old when they begin HPRS.

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

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

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

Yes. However, no letters of reference will be accepted from individuals who are current RWJF or have been RWJF staff members within the last five years, the RWJF Board of Trustees, staff members from the NPC, or other RWJF national leadership program centers.

**PROGRAM DETAILS**

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

Health Policy Research Scholars will officially begin September 1, 2020 and will end in four years, or once the Scholar completes his or her doctoral requirements – whichever occurs first. After this time, Scholars will transition to HPRS alumni.

**What is the time commitment for the program?**

This program will be supplemental to your doctoral training and may require up to an additional 10 hours per month during the academic year for the online training modules Scholars will also attend an Annual Leadership Institute, likely in March/April, and a required one-week Summer Institute in July.

**Where will the HPRS Program happen?**

The training will be done virtually, except for the dates outlined in the next question.

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

- Participation in 2020 HPRS Fall Institute in Baltimore, MD, October 9th-11<sup>th</sup>
- Participation in 2021 RWJF Leadership Institute, Spring and annually thereafter
- Participation in the 2021 HPRS Summer Institute in Baltimore, MD in July 2021 (1 week)

**Are the travel and lodging expenses covered by the HPRS Program?**

Yes, travel and lodging to events required of RWJF scholars are covered.

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

Scholars will receive up to \$30,000 per year for up to 4 years. Grants will be made to the scholars' home institution to support the scholar's participation in the program. Scholars will work with their home institutions to determine how the grant funds will be used to support the participants' successful completion of the program, for example, living expenses, relevant conference/workshop registration fees, travel, supplies, equipment, software, and other scholar needs. Grant funding is not intended to support the individual's tuition or indirect expenses of the home institutions. The stipend is to be used to support the Scholars by alleviating some of the financial burden with attending graduate school.

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

Students who have graduate or teaching assistantships are still eligible to receive the HPRS stipend; however, if a student has another stipend-based scholarship there may be restrictions or limits to the other stipend the student receives. Please note that the HPRS stipend will be given to the scholar's home institution to disburse to the scholar, so any stipends will have to follow home institution rules on multiple stipends. We strongly encourage applicants to discuss the impact that receiving this award may have on other assistance with their home institutions prior to submitting an application.

### **What is the dissertation grant?**

Scholars may apply for one-time dissertation award of up to \$10,000, which will be available through a competitive process. Scholars can apply for this grant after they have their proposal accepted by their home institution.

### **How many Health Policy Research Scholars applicants will be funded?**

Up to 60 Health Policy Research Scholars will be enrolled in the 2020 Cohort.

### **What is meant by "health policy research?"**

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

Alliance for Health Policy and Systems Research, WHO 2016

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

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

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

**What is “Change Leadership?”**

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

**What is meant by “home discipline?”**

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

**What is meant by “Home Institution Mentor?”**

The home institution mentor is the faculty member who has agreed to work with the scholar to support, advocate, and guide their successful progress toward the student’s doctoral degree. This person is a critical part of the scholar’s mentoring team. The home institution mentor will participate in an onboarding webinar with the Scholar in September/October 2020. The home institution mentor will receive a small honorarium from the NPC each year that the scholar is active in the program. Home institution mentors will also have access to information shared via newsletters, professional development resources, and select opportunities to interact with other home institution mentors, the NPC, and Scholars.

**Do the Home Institution Mentors need to travel as well?**

No.

**The Call for Applications references RWJF’s Policy on Open Access. Where can I find more information?**

The policy and frequently asked questions on the policy can be found at <https://www.rwjf.org/en/about-rwjf/our-policies/policy-for-open-access.html>.