Data to Improve Community Conditions Shaped by Structural Racism Call for Proposals (CFP) Frequently Asked Questions

Contents

Contacting Us and Finding Information

1. **Who can I contact if I have a question about the CFP?**

For all questions, please email *data2action@urban.org*. For the <u>registration</u> period, we will accept questions through April 19th before COB. For the <u>application</u> period, we will accept questions through May 25th before COB.

2. **Who can I contact if I have a question about the RWJF online registration and application system?**

If you are facing difficulties with the RWJF online registration and application system, review the "Troubleshooting Tips" found in the "Resources" area on the left side of most screens within the online proposal site. If the answer to your question is not found there, please email *data2action@urban.org.* We encourage you to submit in advance of the deadlines so that any unforeseen difficulties, e.g., technical problems, may be addressed well before the deadline.

3. **Where can I access the applicant webinar?**

A link to a recording of the webinar can found in the "Resources" area on the left side of most screens within the online proposal site. Review the "Applicant Web Conference" section to find the recording link and the webinar slides.

We encouraged you to view the webinar prior to submitting your application.

Registering, Applying, and Selection Criteria

4. How do I register?

Go to: *https://rwjf.ws/3Ds3CmH* and click on the green "Apply Online" Button. Note that you need to create an account at *http://my.rwjf.org* before you begin if you don't already have one.

5. Is the registration process (that includes creating an account) for a person or for an organization?

Accounts are associated with individual email addresses, and it is possible for an organization to have multiple people with accounts. Organizations need to decide who is the project director, and that person should register for this opportunity for their organization. If the person registering for their organization has an account but does not remember their password, they can click on the "forgot password" link.

6. Will all organizations that register to apply receive an invitation to submit an application?

All <u>eligible</u> organizations that register to apply will receive an invitation to submit an application. Eligible organizations are:

- Organizations, not individuals.
- Tax-exempt under Section 501(c)(3) or Section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code.
- NOT a university. Universities, whether public or private, are ineligible to apply, but are eligible to partner with an applicant that is a 501(c)(3) or Section 501(c)(4) organization.
- Organizations that are fiscally sponsored by an eligible tax-exempt 501(c) organization.

7. Can I submit an application if I did not register to apply?

No. Any organization that wants to apply for this opportunity must register by April 20, 2022 (3 p.m. ET).

8. When can I submit my proposal?

Organizations invited to apply can submit their proposals anytime between May 2nd and the deadline for receipt of full proposals at 3 p.m. ET on May 26th.

9. Does my application need to be submitted in English?

If for any reason you would like to submit the application in another language, please reach out to our team at *data2action@urban.org* and we will do our best to ensure that you will be able to submit your application in your language of choice.

10. We have a collaborating partner. Should their contact information be listed in the key contacts in the application system?

This is not required. People who are listed in key contacts will receive foundation related correspondence. Applicants should only list key contacts external to the organization if they want those individuals to receive foundation correspondence. It is more important for applicants to identify their collaborating partner in the application questions.

11. What happens if I turn my registration or application in late or am having technical difficulties submitting my application?

Late registrations and applications will not be accepted. If you are facing difficulties with the RWJF online application system, notify the program administrator immediately by sending an email to data2action@urban.org. We encourage you to submit your registration and proposal in advance of the deadline so that any unforeseen.

12. How will applications be judged?

Proposals will be reviewed using the selection criteria listed on pages 6 and 7 in the CFP.

13. Will preference be given to certain applicants based on community size?

No. Projects that are state or national in scope are ineligible. Any other type of community including urban, suburban, and rural are eligible focus areas.

14. Will preference be given to certain applicants based on organization size or budget?

No. All applicants from eligible organizations will be considered for funding and all eligible applications will be assessed based on the selection criteria listed in the CFP.

15. Are organizations that received funding in the 2020 Using Data to Inform Local Decisions on COVID-19 Response & Recovery program eligible to apply?

Yes. Organizations that received funding are eligible to apply for this program. All proposals from eligible organizations will be reviewed using the selection criteria in the CFP. There is no preference or priority related to prior receipt of funding.

16. Will applicants who were not selected be able to meet with RWJF and/or the Urban Institute so that we may learn from the process?

RWJF policy prevents us from providing individual critiques of proposals submitted.

General Grant Program Characteristics

17. How many grants will be awarded?

RWJF expects to award up to 35 grants of $40,000. However, the total number of awarded grants will depend on the quality and quantity of the applications received.

18. What are the duration of the grants?

The funding opportunity will only be available for projects lasting up to nine months from the anticipated September 1, 2022 start date of the grant agreement. The budget will need to be expended within the nine-month period of performance.

19. Will technical assistance be provided to grantees?

Yes, technical assistance will be provided to grantees by The Urban Institute. This may include providing grantees with referrals to tools and resources that are relevant to their grant work. Examples of technical assistance that will be available to grantees include reviewing data collection instruments and protocols, consultations with subject matter experts, and referrals to tools and examples that are relevant to grant projects.

20. Where can I learn more about the previous set of grantees from "Using Data to Inform Local Decisions on COVID-19 Response & Recovery??

Profiles of each grantee are available at: *https://puttinglocaldatatowork.urban.org/data-covid-19-response-recovery*. In addition, blogs about grantee projects are available at: *https://medium.com/local-data-for-equitable-recovery*

Definitions and Terms

21. How do you define health equity?

Health equity means that everyone has a fair and just opportunity to be as healthy as possible. This requires removing obstacles to health such as poverty, discrimination, and their consequences, including powerlessness and lack of access to good jobs with fair pay, quality education and housing, safe environments, and health care.

22. How do you define structural racism?

Structural or systemic racism is race-based unfair treatment built into policies, laws, and practices. It's also called "systemic" racism because it's fostered through mutually reinforcing systems, policies and practices in housing, education, employment, earnings, benefits, credit, media, health care, and criminal justice. These patterns and practices reinforce discriminatory beliefs, values, and the distribution of resources, which affect health.

23. How do you define "near-term"?

We don't have a particular time frame for near term but want it to be connected to a current real-world planning or decision-making process (not an abstract question).

24. What are examples of community conditions?

Community conditions include but are not limited to: the built environment, community safety and policing, employment, environmental conditions, food insecurity, housing, racial segregation, and transportation.

Eligibility for Organizations

25. Who can participate?

This call for proposals is open to organizations that are tax-exempt under Section 501(c)(3) or Section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code. Universities, whether public or private, are <u>not</u> eligible to apply. Organizations that are fiscally sponsored by an eligible tax-exempt 501(c)3 are also eligible.

26. Can universities apply?

No. Universities, whether public or private, are <u>ineligible</u> to apply, but are eligible to partner with an applicant who is an eligible nonprofit.

27. Are 501(c)3 organizations associated with universities eligible to apply?

Yes. Organizations that are 501(c)3 organization associated with universities can apply if they are independently and separately governed and operated.

28. Can state or local government agencies apply?

No. Only nonprofit organizations that are tax-exempt under Section 501(c)(3) or Section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code can apply.

29. Are fiscally sponsored organizations eligible to apply?

Yes. Organizations that are fiscally sponsored can apply for this opportunity. This fiscal sponsor must be an eligible tax-exempt 501(c)3 organization. The fiscal sponsor cannot be a university, whether public or private. The fiscal sponsor is required to provide the total amount of the award to the organization who will perform the program activities as described in the application less the fiscal sponsorship fee. The fiscal sponsorship fee is an allowable expense under the award.

30. Can a national or state organizations apply for this opportunity?

Yes. While projects with a national or state level focus will not be considered for funding, national or state level organizations can propose a local-level project that uses data to answer a community question. See pages 6 and 7 of the CFP for detailed selection criteria.

31. Are there eligibility limits on who can be a partnering collaborator?

No. Nonprofits (such as data intermediaries, community-based organizations, service providers) must serve as applicants, but academic institutions, public agencies, or any other type of entity may partner with these eligible applicants in order to submit collaborative proposals that can accomplish the funding goals.

32. Can multiple applicants be on the same proposal?

Partnerships between multiple organizations are encouraged to apply. However, only one eligible organization can serve as the applicant and the grant recipient. The applicant organization (grant recipient) must retain at least 50% of the budget, this 50% cannot be distributed to partners.

33. Can my organization submit multiple applications to this funding opportunity?

No. Organizations may only submit one application.

34. Can we submit a proposal for this opportunity if we are applying for another RWJF opportunity or receive funding from another RWJF program?

Yes, current applicants or grantees from other programs are welcome to apply.

35. Do we apply with a researcher identified, or is there opportunity to match us with a researcher if we have our research project outlined?

All proposals need to propose a team that meets the selection criteria of having expertise with data and with community engagement. The Urban Institute and RWJF are not able match applicants with research partners.

Alignment of Proposed Activities with CFP Goals

36. What are examples of activities that proposed projects can include?

Please consult pages 3 and 4 of the CFP for examples of activities and projects.

37. What are examples of activities that will not be considered for funding?

The following activities will be not considered for funding or supported: programmatic evaluations, community health needs assessments, data collection solely to support grant writing for other opportunities, or health impact assessments.

38. Will proposals that are national in scope be considered?

No. This funding opportunity is designed to fund organizations to provide data and data services in the community in which they are located. If you are an applicant that performs work at a national scale, you must propose activities in the locality or region where you are physically based or partner with a local affiliate or collaborator in another city with which you have previous relationships.

39. Are proposals that expand the scope of an ongoing project eligible?

We welcome applicants to submit projects that are new in nature as well as projects that expand the scope of an ongoing project. An example of expanding the scope of an ongoing project include proposing the examination of a new question related to community conditions and health equity. You could also tailor previous analysis for a new audience, replicate analysis for an additional neighborhood or county, or implement new activities related to communications and engagement. There are lots of possibilities.

40. What level of specificity are you looking for when it comes to stakeholders?

Stakeholders should be as specific as possible. For example, "local governments" can be made more specific by identifying the offices or departments within local government. Or instead of "all nonprofits", more specific audiences are those located in a particular neighborhood or working on a particular issue like serving children and youth. Examples of specific local audiences and organizations include a community foundation, community groups in selected neighborhoods, a local collective impact initiative, a city council budget committee, a county health department, or the city economic development department.

41. Can the process of launching a data dashboard meant for community leaders get funding?

Developing public or internal data dashboards is an allowable use of funds. All projects, including dashboard projects, need to identify specific users and uses of data and engage those users in the project design and analysis. Projects that propose data dashboards that do not clearly inform action or decision-making of specific audiences will not rate highly on that selection criteria.

42. Does the project need to relate policies or decisions at the city or county level, or could it be used to inform my organization's program?

A project that uses data to support decision-making related to a nonprofit program will be considered, as long as the program services or activities relate to community conditions.

43. Would a data project to inform local health and human service delivery be considered responsive?

No, projects that are focused on the delivery of health, health-related social needs, or other human services are not responsive to this CFP. Projects need to focus on the community conditions that influence health (see FAQ #24).

44. Can we focus on a community condition not listed in the CFP's definition?

Yes. The list provided in the CFP are only examples; proposals that address other community conditions are welcome.

45. Can a project focus on improving the academic programs or teacher quality of a school?

No, data and community engagement related to what happens in the classroom is important, but not aligned with the goals of this program. Conditions outside the school affecting students, such as transportation, environmental health, or public safety are examples of community conditions that are aligned with the goals of this program.

46. The previous grant program focused on recovery from COVID-19 and using these funding opportunities to address inequities due to COVID-19. Are you looking for projects that are related to COVID-19?

Projects that are related to inequities in COVID-19 response and recovery will be considered, however, this CFP is intentionally broader and invites ideas related to any community condition shaped by structural racism.

47. The CFP says community health needs assessments will not be considered for funding. What is considered a community health needs assessment?

These assessments refer to the required analysis done by nonprofit hospitals and health care systems to identify key health needs and issues.

48. What happens if we propose a project but need to make a change to what we proposed?

We understand that projects can experience shifts and changes based on community input, data availability, data findings, and many other factors. The Urban Institute encourages grantees to request technical assistance to adjust the scope if needed when this happens.

Budget and Use of Funds

49. Can grant funds be used for general operating support?

No. RWJF understands that many nonprofits are navigating many challenges including increased demand for their services. However, funds from this award cannot be used for general operating support.

50. Can I ask for more than $40,000?

The maximum award for grants is $40,000. Proposals for funding over this amount will not be considered.

51. What do you mean by one-line item budget?

Applicants should indicate they are requesting $40,000 in their proposal submission. The budget does not need to be broken down into categories. Only submit one line indicating $40,000 requested.

52. How will grant funds be distributed?

The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation will execute, administer, and manage all grant agreements with the lead applicant organization indicated in the proposal. The full grant amount will be dispersed at the beginning of the grant period.

53. Are indirect/overhead costs allowed?

Yes. RWJF allows an indirect rate of up to 20%.

54. Could the project fund incentives for participants in focus groups, interviews, or feedback sessions?

Yes, these are allowable uses of funds.

55. Can the project fund capacity building and training for residents involved in a participatory research effort?

Yes, these are allowable uses of funds.

56. Can we have multiple collaborating partners?

Yes. Applicants may have multiple collaborating partners, and subgrant up to 50% of funding to these partners.

Data

57. Does data have to be publicly shareable? If we are using sensitive data in protected space with our local health department, we won't be able to publish data. Is that a liability for our application?

If you are using sensitive or confidential data that is not publicly shareable, this will not count against your application. To the extent possible, we encourage sharing of methodologies and best practices, however, this does not require your project to rely on publicly sharable data.

58. Are you looking for primarily quantitative data projects or also qualitative ones?

Data are any collected statistics or information. Data may be quantitative, like information from surveys or administrative operations of governments, foundations, or nonprofits. They may also be qualitative, such as stories from lived experience or material from structured data collection like focus groups or interviews.

59. Does data collection have to be part of the project we propose?

No. Applicants can propose projects that leverage existing data and are not required to collect new data.

60. Can an organization apply if it doesn't have data expertise?

All proposals will be reviewed using the selection criteria in the CFP, which includes the requirement for data and community engagement expertise. If an applicant does not have data expertise, they would need to have a collaborating partner with data expertise to be rated highly on the criteria. Similarly, an organization that does not have community engagement expertise should apply with a collaborating partner that has this expertise.

61. Will the Urban Institute serve as the Institutional Review Board for grantees?

No. If a project requires review by an institutional review board (IRB), applicants should account for IRB selection, preparation, and review in their timeline and budget. The Urban Institute may be able to provide technical assistance in reviewing a grantee's IRB package but cannot serve as a grantee's IRB.