



New Jersey Health Initiatives: Small Communities Forging Hyperlocal Data Collaboratives

Recognizing a special commitment and responsibility to its community and to its state, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) established the New Jersey Health Initiatives (NJHI) program 30 years ago to honor the philanthropic legacy of RWJF's founder, General Robert Wood Johnson II. Like the rest of the nation, New Jersey faces an array of challenges that may prevent those working and residing in the state from living the healthiest life possible. NJHI is an example of RWJF's commitment to supporting initiatives that address those problems and advance health equity in the state.

PURPOSE

The purpose of the Small Communities Forging Hyperlocal Data Collaboratives funding initiative is to provide technical assistance and support to small communities in southern New Jersey. Through this initiative, funded communities will address upstream challenges to health and health equity by: 1) collaborating across sectors; and 2) making better use of data resources.

This initiative is intentionally designed to improve equity in "small communities" (<50,000 residents) in southern New Jersey by deliberately focusing on resources to which these communities are less likely to have access when making decisions that can improve the health of the community. Through this initiative, eligible communities will be provided a series of tools which will include a local data dashboard; examples of local data that can illustrate the factors that make up a healthy community; processes to identify local gaps and challenges; and opportunities to facilitate the development of common goals for improvement. The data dashboard will be developed by [City Health Dashboard](#) and will include data specific to city boundaries—such as life expectancy, obesity, and children in poverty—with the goal of improving the health and well-being of everyone in the community.

NJHI will work with partners at the Senator Walter Rand Institute for Public Affairs at Rutgers-Camden; the Data Across Sectors for Health (DASH)/All-In: Data for Community Health program office at the Illinois Public Health Institute; and City Health Dashboard to provide technical assistance, tools, and support to the applicant and grantee communities. Grant funds will be awarded by RWJF.

The Co-Creation Event

A focal element of the Small Communities Forging Hyperlocal Data Collaboratives initiative is a co-creation event. This activity includes an interactive informational session, workshops, and coaching/facilitation from collaborators (e.g., RWJF staff; NJHI staff and Advisory Committee members; DASH/All-In; City Health Dashboard) who have expertise in areas such as grantmaking, local/community knowledge, data, the social determinants of health and health equity. The 10 communities invited to apply for grants through the initiative will spend a day at the co-creation event to gain a better understanding of opportunities to address the social determinants of health using data-driven ideas.

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Each community will have a facilitator assigned to their team who will work with the team to develop the initial project to be funded under the initiative. Each community will have the opportunity to apply for a two-year grant of up to \$50,000 from RWJF. It is anticipated that communities will likely implement more than one project during the initiative with the sum of all projects totaling no more than \$50,000. At the conclusion of the co-creation event, communities will have developed a strong draft of a proposal that they can finalize over several weeks and submit via the RWJF online system.

In June 2020, selected communities will begin implementing their projects. They will continue to receive coaching/mentoring and technical assistance, and participate in in-person, collaborative learning sessions as they implement their initial projects and develop at least one follow-up project.

The Communities

Teams from 10 communities in eight southern New Jersey counties have been invited to participate in the co-creation event on February 27, 2020. These communities are:

Burlington City
Clayton
Egg Harbor City
Glassboro
Hammonton
Lawnside
Millville
Penns Grove
Pleasantville
Salem City

TOTAL AWARDS

- Up to 10 grants of up to and including \$50,000 each will be awarded by RWJF through this initiative.
- Grants will begin on June 1, 2020 with a duration of two years.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

- Applicant organizations must be located in New Jersey.
- Applicant organizations must be either public entities or nonprofit organizations that are tax exempt under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code and are not private foundations or nonfunctionally integrated Type III supporting organizations. The Foundation may require additional documentation as part of its due diligence process.
- Examples of applicant organizations include, but are not limited to: local health and human service agencies; K-12 education; colleges and universities; hospital systems; faith-based organizations; local government; government agencies or departments; nonprofits; or other eligible entities interested in making lasting changes to build a Culture of Health in their communities. While the applicant organization will be one entity, grant funding is intended to support the strategies and work of the community team.

OUR EQUITY, DIVERSITY, AND INCLUSION COMMITMENT

The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation is committed to building a Culture of Health that provides everyone in America a fair and just opportunity for health and well-being. Achieving this goal requires focus on equity, diversity, and

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inclusion. To that end, we are committed to fostering diverse perspectives. We recognize that individuals' perspectives are shaped by a host of factors, such as their race, ethnicity, gender, physical and mental ability, age, socioeconomic status, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, familial status, education, religion, legal status, military service, political affiliation, geography, and other personal and professional experiences.

We know that the presence of diverse perspectives alone is not sufficient. Therefore, we also are committed to creating inclusive environments where all individuals are encouraged to share their perspectives and experiences. We believe that only through valuing our differences and similarities, and remaining vigilant in advancing equity, will we be able to maintain an equitable workplace and actively pursue equity in all aspects of our work. We commit to being continuous learners and working alongside others to cultivate equity, diversity, and inclusion.

SELECTION CRITERIA

The community teams represented by applicants for this initiative are expected to be broad-based, representing multiple sectors, and representative of the community rather than issue-focused. For this reason, we will not fund more than one team in any community.

Community team requirements:

- Understanding of community makeup, trends, and needs through interpretation and application of available community-level data.
- Vision, passion, and capacity to build and maintain a Culture of Health, advancing health equity in their community.
- Commitment among partners to share and use data to inform decision-making;
- A commitment to sustainable, collaborative efforts for long-term, community-focused solutions;
- Representation from a diversity of residents, organizations, and agencies from the community, all committed to ensuring that everyone has a fair and just opportunity to be as healthy as possible.

In addition to the criteria above, selection will be based upon review of a five-page, single-spaced proposal narrative that should include answers to the following questions:

1. Describe your town (e.g., demographics, community assets, history, disparities). What are the opportunities and challenges that currently exist in your town? Please share any evidence or data that you have to support your position.
2. Describe the organization that has taken the lead in pulling this application together and putting together the community team. What assets/experience/expertise make this organization best suited to lead this work?
3. How did you decide on this community team? What factors led you to identify these organizations and individuals? What assets do they bring to this initiative? What, if any, experience do they have collaborating on community issues or projects? Are there partners not yet engaged that could be included in the implementation of this work? How will you engage people or groups who are meant to benefit from this project?
4. Thinking about health in your community in the broadest sense means considering root causes—such as employment and income; discrimination; education; housing; transportation; and access to green space. With the data and information you have available, what are the three most important health challenges in your community?

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How will the tools and funding made available through this initiative be used to shape your team's thinking about your community's issues and help devise a plan to address those challenges?

5. What data tools or resources are currently available to inform decision-making on health in your community? This might include tools and/or data from the schools, municipal government or the police department. Are there any current mechanisms or opportunities to share data across organizations or sectors?
6. What do you hope to accomplish with your community over this two-year grant period? What will the team focus on during the first phase of work, and what activities will be undertaken? What indicators will be used to measure progress of this phase?
7. Will specific team members lead aspects of the proposed work? If so, please describe.
8. How would you describe success through this overall initiative?
9. Are there any other key factors or circumstances about your community that you would like us to know?

EVALUATION AND MONITORING

The Wandersman Center, an independent research group selected and funded by RWJF will conduct formative and summative (outcome) evaluations of the Small Communities Forging Hyperlocal Data Collaboratives to improve the initiative during implementation and assess its impact. As a condition of accepting RWJF funds, we require grantees to participate in the evaluation. By combining formative and summative evaluations, NJHI will model for communities how data can be used to improve planning and implementation to increase the likelihood of success, and produce an unbiased assessment of initiative outcomes.

Grantees will receive ongoing technical assistance to systematically collect and share information with the NJHI team and consultants. This information will be used to assess and monitor progress, identify problems, and develop grantee supports such as face-to-face trainings and webinars.

Grantees are expected to meet RWJF requirements for the submission of narrative and financial reports, as well as periodic information needed for overall project performance monitoring and management. RWJF may ask project directors to participate in periodic meetings and give progress reports on their grants. At the close of each grant, the grantee is expected to provide a written report on the project and its findings suitable for wide dissemination.

APPLICANT SURVEY PROCESS

The grant project director may be contacted after the submission deadline by SSRS, an independent research firm. The project director will be asked to complete a brief, online survey about the proposal submission process and applicant characteristics. This voluntary questionnaire will take no more than 15 minutes to complete. Responses provided to SSRS will not impact the funding decision for your proposal in any way.

SSRS will protect the confidentiality of your responses. RWJF will not receive any data that links your name with your survey responses.

USE OF GRANT FUNDS

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

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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.

OPEN ACCESS

In order to ensure RWJF-supported research is made accessible to a wide and diverse audience, grantees who publish findings in peer-reviewed publications must do so in open access journals and/or must include funds in their budgets to cover the cost of making the resulting publications open access (typically \$2,000–\$5,000 per manuscript).

HOW TO APPLY

Proposals for this program are by invitation only and must be submitted via the RWJF online system. You will receive an email invitation with a link to the RWJF online system and additional instructions. To begin your proposal, select the link in the email and follow the instructions.

Please direct inquiries to:

New Jersey Health Initiatives
Phone: (856) 225-6733
Email: info@njhi.org

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. RWJF does not provide individual critiques of proposals submitted.

Late Submissions

RWJF will accept only those proposals that are completed/submitted at the time of the deadline. Because one of our Guiding Principles is to treat everyone with fairness and respect, RWJF's deadline policy applies to all applicants. If an applicant experiences a problem with the online application system that may prevent them from submitting on time, please notify the program administrator immediately. To do so, click on the "Contact Us" link found in the "Resources" area on the left side of most screens within the online proposal site. We encourage you to submit your proposal in advance of the deadline so that any unforeseen difficulties, e.g., technical problems, may be addressed well before the deadline.

PROGRAM DIRECTION

Direction and technical assistance for this program are provided by the New Jersey Health Initiatives, which serves as the program office located at:

Rutgers University-Camden
323 Cooper Street
Camden, NJ 08102
Phone: (856) 225-6733
Email: info@njhi.org
Website: www.njhi.org

Responsible staff members at the program office are:

Bob Atkins, PhD, RN, FAAN, *director*
Diane Hagerman, *deputy director*, programs
Milton Ellis, *deputy director*, operations

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Responsible staff members at the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation are:

Maisha Simmons, MPA, *director*
Catherine Malone, DBA, MBA, *program officer*
Susan Halucka, *program financial analyst*

KEY DATES AND DEADLINES

- **February 27, 2020**
Co-Creation Event.
- **August 14, 2020 (3 p.m. ET)**
Deadline for receipt of full proposals.*
- **September 2020**
Notification of awards.
- **October 15, 2020**
Two-year grant period begins.

*All proposals must be submitted via the RWJF online system. All applicants should log in to the system and familiarize themselves with online submission requirements well before the final submission deadline. Staff may not be able to assist all applicants in the final 24 hours before the submission deadline.

ABOUT THE ROBERT WOOD JOHNSON FOUNDATION

For more than 45 years, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation has worked to improve health and health care. We are working alongside others to build a national Culture of Health that provides everyone in America a fair and just opportunity for health and well-being. For more information, visit 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 www.rwjf.org/manage-your-subscriptions.html.

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