

2014 Call for Proposals

December 3, 2014 (3:00 p.m. ET)



Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

POLICY-RELEVANT INSURANCE STUDIES

BACKGROUND

The Affordable Care Act (ACA) has created both public and private coverage options for thousands of Americans. The first open enrollment period, albeit challenging, generated useful information about access to and enrollment in affordable coverage. Yet, a multitude of questions remain, particularly around possible changes in the employer-sponsored insurance, as well as the potential for increased integration of Medicaid, CHIP and the Marketplace. How are employers likely to respond to new options for employee coverage? Are there ways that states might reduce differences between Medicaid and Marketplace plans in order to mitigate churning and create seamless continuity of coverage? Research is needed to predict the effects of potential policy changes and/or evaluate current policies to guide public and private decision-makers through these questions and many more challenging coverage issues.

PURPOSE

The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation is committed to expanding coverage and, as such, works to contribute to the policy process by funding timely and policy-relevant empirical research on questions related to health insurance. This solicitation seeks to fund quantitative studies that address the macro or micro effects of policies related to health insurance using appropriate empirical methods, including but not limited to micro-simulation and/or computable general equilibrium models.

Major topics of interest may include, but are not limited to:

1. Employer-Sponsored Insurance—This topic concerns the relationship between various employer-sponsored insurance scenarios and enrollment, premiums and costs in the Marketplaces. For example:
 - What is the impact of changes in small or large employer offering rates on: enrollment and premiums in the Marketplace; federal subsidy costs; employee wages; and/or income distribution?
 - How are employers reacting to the shared responsibility for coverage requirement and what are the implications of their responses for coverage and federal costs?
 - What might be the impact on coverage from allowing participation of larger employer groups (e.g., over 100; over 500; over 1,000) in the Marketplace?

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- What is the likely impact of firms shifting retiree coverage to the Marketplaces on overall premiums and enrollment? What is the labor market effect (e.g., early retirement) from the availability of Marketplace coverage and subsidized premiums?
 - What are some scenarios for the integration of some or all aspects of public and private exchanges?
2. Public financing of health care—This topic concerns the feasibility of integrating Medicaid and CHIP with the Marketplaces. For example:
- What are estimated state and federal costs of “private option” Medicaid under various scenarios? What is the impact of the private option on premiums?
 - What are estimates of the impact of incorporating CHIP benefits into Qualified Health Plans on premiums, cost sharing, and administrative costs?
 - If the CHIP program were to lapse and enrollees shift to Marketplace plans or Medicaid, what would be the impact on insurance coverage, premiums, cost-sharing, and administrative costs?
 - What would be the properties of an environment where all public and private coverage was administered through an exchange or exchanges assuming that existing income and categorically based subsidies were provided to eligible enrollees?

TOTAL AWARDS

- Up to \$650,000 will be available under this call for proposals.
- Project funding will range from \$50,000 to \$150,000 to accommodate studies of six–12 months. Preference will be given to rapid-turnaround projects that can be completed within six months. Projects lasting longer than six months must provide strong justification for the grant period.
- Up to five studies will be funded.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Researchers, as well as practitioners and public and private policymakers working with researchers, are eligible to submit proposals through their organizations. Projects may be generated from disciplines including health services research; economics; sociology; program evaluation; political science; public policy; public health; public administration; law; business administration; or other related fields.

The Foundation may give preference to applicants that are 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

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or Type III supporting organizations. The Foundation may require additional documentation. Applicant organizations must be based in the United States or its territories.

DIVERSITY STATEMENT

Consistent with RWJF values, this program embraces diversity and inclusion across multiple dimensions, such as race, ethnicity, gender, disability, age and socioeconomic status. We strongly encourage applications in support of individual candidates who will help us expand the perspectives and experiences we bring to our work. We believe that the more we include diverse perspectives and experiences in our work, the more successful we will be as we strive together to build a Culture of Health, enabling all in our diverse society to lead healthy lives, now, and for generations to come.

SELECTION CRITERIA

- Importance and policy relevance of the question to be addressed.
- Strength of the proposed methodology and incorporation of reasonable and relevant theoretical models and assumptions.
- Appropriateness and availability of proposed data sources.
- Qualifications and expertise of the applicant.
- Ability to inform decision-makers and create timely deliverables for wide dissemination, based on preliminary findings and throughout the life of the grant, in addition to papers suitable for peer-reviewed publication.
- Appropriateness of the timeline and budget.

MONITORING

RWJF monitors the grantees' efforts and careful stewardship of grant funds to assure accountability. Grantees will be required to submit periodic narrative and financial reports.

APPLICANT SURVEY PROCESS

To help us measure the effectiveness of RWJF grantmaking and improve the grant application experience, we will survey the Principal Investigator (PI) listed in proposals submitted under this call for proposals. Shortly after the application deadline, the PI will be contacted by Princeton Survey Research Associates International (PSRAI), an independent research firm, and asked to complete a brief, online survey about the application process and applicant characteristics. This voluntary questionnaire will take no more than 15 minutes to complete. Responses provided to PSRAI will not impact the funding decision for the proposals in any way.

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PSRAI will protect the confidentiality of the responses. RWJF will not receive any data that links a name with the survey responses. If you have any questions about the survey or the use of the data, feel free to email applicantfeedback@rwjf.org.

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 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.

HOW TO APPLY

Applications for this solicitation must be submitted via the RWJF online system. Visit <http://www.rwjf.org/cfp/pris> and use the *Apply Online* link. If you have not already done so, you will be required to register at <http://my.rwjf.org> before you begin the application process.

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

Please direct inquiries to polstudies@rwjf.org. Be sure to include your phone number. We will make every effort to respond to all inquiries within 24 hours.

Applicants will submit a fully developed proposal, which should be no more than 10 pages and should contain the following information about the proposed project:

- Research question and significance to the field.
- Data sources and data acquisition plan.
- Methodology.
- Background and experience of the applicant.
- Deliverables and plan for dissemination.
- Budget.

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STAGE 1: FULL PROPOSALS

Applicants must submit a full proposal of no more than 10 pages accompanied by a budget and budget narrative.

PROGRAM DIRECTION

Responsible staff members at the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation are:

- Katherine Hempstead, PhD, *team director and senior program officer*
- Sharleen Rajput, *program financial analyst*

KEY DATES AND DEADLINES

December 3, 2014 (3 :00 p.m. ET)

Deadline for receipt of full proposals.

March 4, 2015

Notification of finalists.

May 15, 2015

Grants start.

ABOUT THE ROBERT WOOD JOHNSON FOUNDATION

For more than 40 years the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation has worked to improve the health and health care of all Americans. We are striving to build a national Culture of Health that will enable all Americans to live longer, healthier lives now and for generations to come. For more information, visit www.rwjf.org. Follow the Foundation on Twitter at www.rwjf.org/twitter or on Facebook at www.rwjf.org/facebook.

Sign up to receive email alerts on upcoming calls for proposals at www.rwjf.org/funding.

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