



Robert Wood Johnson  
Foundation

# 2017 RWJF Culture of Health Prize

Call for Applications from Communities

Application Deadline:

**November 3, 2016 at 3 p.m. ET**









# The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Culture of Health Prize

**The RWJF Culture of Health Prize honors and elevates U.S. communities that are making great strides in their journey toward better health.**

The *RWJF Culture of Health Prize* recognizes communities that have placed a priority on health and are creating powerful partnerships and deep commitments that will enable everyone, especially those facing the greatest challenges, with the opportunity to live well. A Culture of Health recognizes that health and wellbeing are greatly influenced by where we live, work, the safety of our surroundings, and the relationships we have in our families and communities. The Prize elevates the compelling stories of local leaders and community members who are coming together to create conditions for health and prosperity by transforming neighborhoods, schools, and businesses—so that good health flourishes everywhere.

In this fifth round of the annual Prize competition, up to 10 winning communities will:

- Receive a \$25,000 cash prize;
- Have their stories and successes celebrated broadly to inspire others toward locally-driven change;
- Engage with other national and community leaders as ambassadors for building a Culture of Health across America; and,
- Join a Prize Alumni Network to learn with other Prize winners and network locally, regionally, and nationally.

People in communities throughout the country are coming together with a shared vision of equity and opportunity for all, and a commitment to making needed and lasting changes to improve health. This is happening in diverse places—in cities and small rural towns, on tribal reservations—no matter what their physical, economic, or demographic challenges may be.

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***“We made a big commitment to the Prize competition because we’re committed to this work. We want to be a part of the network. We want to learn and contribute. We’re not in it for the glory, not for the money, but for the long haul.”***  
– Prize applicant

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## What Does the Application Process Involve?

**Through the RWJF Culture of Health Prize application process, a community comes together to tell their inspiring stories of collaboration, action, and results.**

Communities should understand they are applying for a prize and not a grant. The Prize recognizes work that has already been accomplished so there is no required workplan or budget. To be competitive, it is imperative that Prize applicants keep a community-wide focus in mind through all phases of the competition.

# Who Is Eligible to Apply?

**The RWJF Culture of Health Prize honors U.S. communities; submissions representing the work of a single organization will not be considered.**

To be eligible to apply for a prize, a “community” must be based in the United States\* and fall into one of the following categories:

- Town, village, borough, or other local incorporated place
- City
- County or parish
- Federally-recognized tribe
- Native Hawaiian organization serving and representing the interests of Native Hawaiians in Hawaii
- Region (such as contiguous towns, cities, or counties)

\* Communities within U.S. territories are welcome to apply.

Neighborhoods, states, and unincorporated local communities are not eligible to apply.

With the exception of previous Prize winners and 2016 finalists, all past applicants are eligible to reapply in 2017 (2016 finalists may reapply in 2018).

Communities will be asked to select primary and alternate contact people for their application, preferably from two different organizations. Each individual will indicate one of the following organization types with which they are affiliated:

- Business
- Community coalition or resident group
- Hospital or health care organization
- Local foundation
- Government agency or department
- School
- Non-profit community-based organization
- Community development organization

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. Community partners can decide together how to use the funds to benefit the community; budget reports on Prize expenditures are not required.

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***“The introspection involved in writing the application served as a significant motivator for us. When we saw on paper how much we actually accomplished, it invigorated us to forge forward.”***  
**– Prize applicant**

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## What Are Judges Looking For?

**The RWJF Culture of Health Prize celebrates what communities have done as well as how they have done it.**

There is no single path forward to building a Culture of Health. Each community has distinct strengths, challenges, and approaches to change. Solutions are wide-ranging and everyone has a role to play. However, there are characteristics shared by communities that are catalyzing and sustaining positive change. These characteristics are reflected in the six criteria for the *RWJF Culture of Health Prize*, serving as the lens through which all community applications are judged. Judges will assess submissions for evidence of accomplishments across six Prize criteria and have a particular interest in the extent to which accomplishments reflect the first three criteria.

# RWJF Culture of Health Prize Criteria

## Phase I Applications Should Emphasize These Criteria

1

### **Defining health in the broadest possible terms ...**

... means using diverse strategies to address the many things that influence health in our communities. This includes all of the factors in the *County Health Rankings* model of health (page 10): health behaviors, clinical care, social and economic factors, and the physical environment. Judges will look to see that applicant communities are taking action across these areas. Applicant communities are also encouraged to share how they respond to community needs, assets, and priorities. Given the importance of social and economic factors in influencing health, judges are particularly interested in seeing how communities are making changes in education, employment/income, family and social support, and community safety.

2

### **Committing to sustainable systems changes and policy-oriented long-term solutions ...**

... means making thoughtful, data-informed, and sustainable policy, programmatic, and systems changes. This includes having a strategic approach to problem-solving that recognizes the value of evidence and the promise of innovation. Applicants are encouraged to show how residents, leaders, and organizations across sectors are collectively identifying priorities and taking coordinated action to solve the health challenges facing their communities.

3

### **Cultivating a shared and deeply-held belief in the importance of equal opportunity for health ...**

... means creating a shared commitment to identifying and addressing gaps in health and creating conditions that give everyone the opportunity to achieve the best health possible. To do this, all individuals should have a voice and a role to play in creating more equitable communities. Applicant communities are encouraged to 1) demonstrate how their efforts are leading to a community where all people feel a sense of security, belonging, and trust, and 2) show how collective problem-solving and diverse perspectives, including full participation by those most affected by poor health outcomes, are driving solutions.

# 4

## **Harnessing the collective power of leaders, partners, and community members ...**

... means that individuals and organizations are all working together to provide everyone with the opportunity for better health. This includes developing methods for buy-in, decision-making, and coordinated action; building a shared sense of accountability; continuously communicating about health improvement efforts; and developing leadership skills and capacity among all community members. Applicant communities are encouraged to demonstrate how business, government, residents, and non-profit organizations are working together and across sectors and disciplines to improve health outcomes; and how becoming and staying healthy is valued by the entire community.

# 5

## **Securing and making the most of available resources ...**

... means adopting an enterprising spirit toward health improvement. This includes critically examining existing and potential resources, with an eye on value; a focus on leveraging existing assets; prioritization of upstream investments that address social and economic determinants of health; and a strong belief that everyone in the community can be a force in health improvement. Applicant communities are encouraged to demonstrate how they are creatively approaching the generation, allocation, and mobilization of diverse financial and non-financial resources to improve health.

# 6

## **Measuring and sharing progress and results ...**

... means beginning with the destination in mind. This includes a commitment to quality and impact in both process (how the work is done) and outcomes (what impact is achieved). Applicant communities should show how they are: 1) establishing shared priorities; 2) agreeing upon definitions of success; 3) identifying specific goals; 4) using data to track progress; 5) changing course when progress is not evident; 6) and communicating and celebrating successes as they achieve better health outcomes.

## Key Dates and Deadlines

### Phase I

**November 3, 2016 (3 p.m. ET)**

Phase I Applications (for all applicant communities) due.

### Phase II

**December 9, 2016**

Invitations extended to select applicant communities to submit Phase II Applications.

**January 20, 2017 (3 p.m. ET)**

Phase II Applications (for invited communities) due.

### Site Visit Phase

**March 3, 2017**

Invitations extended to finalist communities to participate in the Site Visit Phase.

**April 3–June 9, 2017**

Site visits with finalist communities.

### Recognition Phase

**Fall 2017**

National announcement of winners and celebration and learning event.

## The RWJF Culture of Health Prize application has three distinct phases:

### I. Phase I Application

**For Phase I, applicant communities are asked to submit a brief essay up to five single-spaced pages in length to:**

1. Introduce their community
2. Describe when their journey began and what catalyzed collective action (such as an event, opportunity, or decision)
3. Showcase four accomplishments—specific policies, programs, or strategies—that best reflect their response to identified community needs and progress toward better health

Applicant communities are encouraged to keep the following in mind:

- The *County Health Rankings* model (page 10) and the importance of working across the four health factor areas.
- The Prize recognizes communities and applicants who think beyond their own individual organizations and initiatives.
- An accomplishment may be an individual policy, program, or strategy, or an integrated or closely-related collection of policies, programs, or strategies. The application should convey the impact of accomplishments to date and/or expected future impact.
- While judges recognize the tremendous value of planning and convening processes, communities should NOT consider coalition development, community health assessments, or improvement plans as “accomplishments” for this submission.

**To begin the application process**, please visit [www.rwjf.org/prize](http://www.rwjf.org/prize) and use the “Apply Online” link. If you have not already done so, you will be required to register at <http://my.rwjf.org>. All applicants should log in to the system and familiarize themselves with the 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.

Submission of an application gives permission to RWJF and the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute (UWPHI) to feature components of the submission as part of its ongoing work to build a Culture of Health.



## II. Phase II Application

A select group of Phase I applicant communities will be invited to compete for a finalist slot by submitting a Phase II Application. For Phase II, invited community applicants will:

- Build on their Phase I essay with additional information about community health improvement efforts.
- Prepare a brief four-minute multimedia presentation that highlights their accomplishments and brings their community to life for judges.
- Draft a site visit itinerary to give judges a sense of what they might see and who they might meet should their community be selected as a finalist.
- Designate a local governmental entity or U.S. tax exempt public charity operating within the community to accept the \$25,000 Prize on the community's behalf, should their community win.

## III. Site Visit Phase

Up to 16 Phase II applicants will advance as finalists in the competition and be invited to host a site visit.

Additional information for Phase II and the Site Visit phase can be found at the "Frequently Asked Questions" link at [www.rwjf.org/prize](http://www.rwjf.org/prize). Detailed guidance will be provided to communities invited to advance in the competition.



## Past Winners

### 2016 winners

To be announced on  
September 14, 2016

### 2015 winners

Bridgeport, CT  
Bronx, NY  
Everett, MA  
Kansas City, MO  
Lawrence, MA  
Menominee Nation, WI  
Spartanburg County, SC  
Waaswaaganing Anishinaabeg  
(Lac du Flambeau Tribe), WI

### 2014 winners

Brownsville, TX  
Buncombe County, NC  
Durham County, NC  
Spokane County, WA  
Taos Pueblo, NM  
Williamson, WV

### 2013 winners

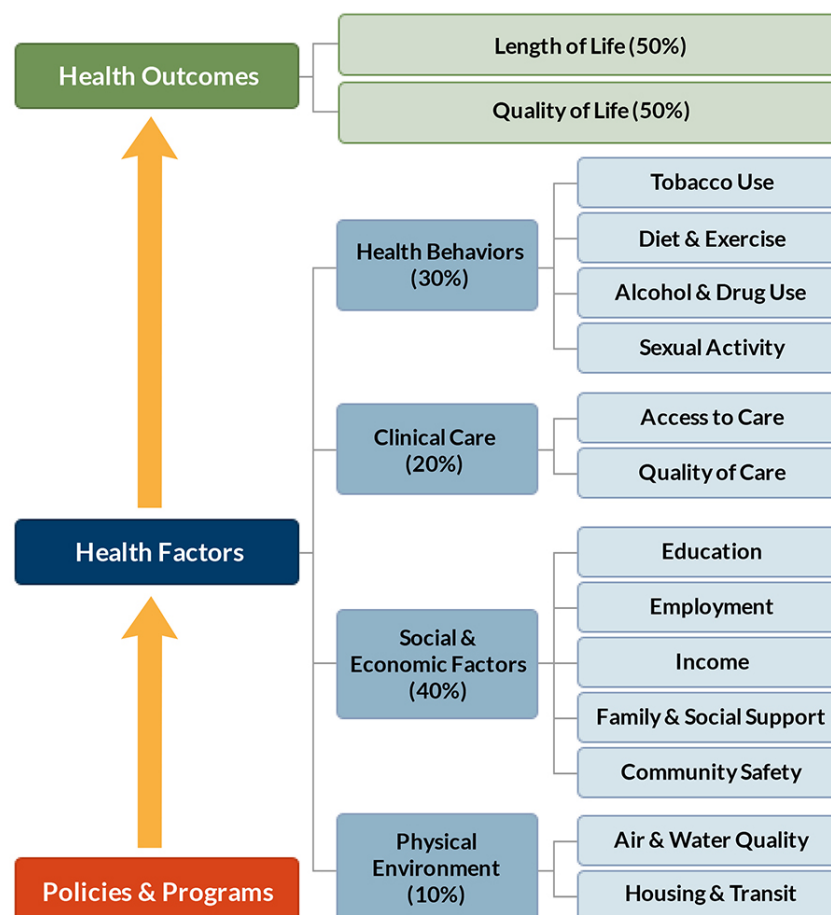
Cambridge, MA  
Fall River, MA  
Manistique, MI  
Minneapolis, MN  
New Orleans, LA  
Santa Cruz County, CA

## How Will Winners Be Selected?

**The RWJF Culture of Health Prize will be awarded to up to 10 communities.**

Judges will evaluate each applicant individually, considering demonstrated progress relative to the Prize criteria and each community's unique challenges, opportunities, resources, and stage of health improvement. Judging will be conducted by program staff at RWJF and UWPHI along with a panel of national experts serving on the Prize Advisory Group. Final decisions will be made by RWJF.

### County Health Rankings Model of Health



County Health Rankings model © 2014 UWPHI

# Where Can My Community Learn More About the RWJF Culture of Health Prize?

Visit us online at [www.rwjf.org/prize](http://www.rwjf.org/prize), view our webinar, or contact us by email or phone. Please note that the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) located on the Prize website contain important details regarding the RWJF Culture of Health Prize and should be reviewed by each community before submitting an application.

## Online Resources:

RWJF Culture of Health Prize, FAQs and Winners Gallery: [www.rwjf.org/prize](http://www.rwjf.org/prize)

## 2017 RWJF Culture of Health Prize Phase I Informational Webinar:

Join us for an informational webinar on the 2017 RWJF Culture of Health Prize Call for Applications on **September 22, 2016 from 3:00–4:00 p.m. ET**. To register go here: <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/522042111104206337>. A recording of the webinar will be posted within a week at [www.rwjf.org/prize](http://www.rwjf.org/prize).

## Contact Information:

E-mail: [prize@match.wisc.edu](mailto:prize@match.wisc.edu)

Tel: 608-263-6983

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*Learn more about how winning communities are building a Culture of Health by visiting the RWJF Culture of Health Prize Winners Gallery: [www.rwjf.org/prize](http://www.rwjf.org/prize)*

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## Program Direction

**The RWJF Culture of Health Prize is a collaboration between the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute.**

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County Health Rankings & Roadmaps and RWJF Culture of Health Prize—Director





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