

2020 Call for Applications

Application Deadline: March 11, 2020 (3 p.m. ET)



Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

Health Policy Research Scholars

BACKGROUND

The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) is 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. Many obstacles pose challenges to this audacious vision. Life expectancy varies widely based on where people live, learn, work, and play. We spend more for our health care than any other developed nation, yet the quality of our health care and our overall health status don't reflect that investment. Our population is increasingly diverse, yet inequities in health persist.

That's why RWJF supports a number of leadership development programs: We know that our nation needs a generation of leaders who recognize that to solve these pressing problems, we must approach them in a new way. Our leadership development programs are built to develop, support and connect leaders who are:

- **Caring**, recognizing that leadership is relational, and that genuine care for others is at the heart of good leadership.
- **Curious**, with a genuine desire to connect, listen, learn, and grow.
- **Collaborative**, with a deep understanding that the changes we seek cannot be accomplished by any one person, organization or sector, and that working together with other change makers across boundaries is essential.
- **Committed** to taking risks and acting boldly to move beyond dreams toward real pathways to change—and to achieving greater equity in communities across our country.

Do you share our vision for leadership—and do you want to take the next step in your leadership journey? We encourage you to explore the [Health Policy Research Scholars](#) program, highlighted in this call for applications (CFA)—or go online to visit our [program finder](#) to find the leadership development program that's right for you.

ABOUT THE HEALTH POLICY RESEARCH SCHOLARS PROGRAM

Health Policy Research Scholars (HPRS) is a four-year national leadership development program for full-time doctoral students from nonclinical, academic disciplines in which policy is a key lever for change (e.g., urban planning; political science; economics; anthropology; education; social work; sociology)—students who are committed to ensuring their research is aligned with the health needs of communities. The program is focused on doctoral students who want to improve health, well-being, and equity; challenge long-standing, entrenched systems; exhibit new ways of working; collaborate across disciplines and sectors; and bolster their leadership skills. By providing training in health policy, how to think politically, and how to craft an actionable health equity research question that can inform solutions, as well as mentorship, career and leadership coaching, HPRS will develop a new cadre of research leaders who will build a Culture of Health in their disciplines and communities.

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The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation recognizes that the increasing diversity in the country's population can best be served when research and researchers also reflect that diversity. We need diverse perspectives as our nation identifies key health policy questions and evaluates the impact of proposed policy solutions in our nation. The disproportionate burden of poor health (and the disproportionate exposure to environmental and socioeconomic conditions that lead to poor health) is borne by individuals marginalized because of their race or ethnicity, socioeconomic status, or other factors. That is why increasing the number of doctoral scholars from marginalized backgrounds and populations underrepresented in specific doctoral disciplines is an essential step in building a Culture of Health and is a focus of this program.

The goal of Health Policy Research Scholars is to create a large cadre of diverse doctoral students from a wide variety of research-focused disciplines—students whose research, connections, and leadership will inform and influence policy toward a Culture of Health. Specifically, we aim to recruit doctoral students from a variety of fields/disciplines (e.g., urban planning; political science; economics; anthropology; education; social work; geography; sociology) who are seeking to use policy change to advance population health and health equity.

Program Activities

Scholars will attend in-person and online learning seminars and courses; participate in research; attend research presentations; and contribute to publications—concurrently with their doctoral program. These activities are designed to support and enrich the doctoral program.

Examples of Health Policy Research Scholars activities are outlined below and subject to change:

Term	Health Policy Research Scholars Program Planned Activities
Fall 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Onboarding webinars (required for both scholars and mentors)HPRS Fall Institute (required for scholars, in person, October 9–11, 2020 in Baltimore, MD)Online course: Introduction to public health, health equity, public policy and the policy process
Spring 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none">RWJF Leadership Institute (required for scholars, in person, Spring 2021: date and location TBD)Online course: Theories of public policy; how policy impacts health; and an introduction to policy implementation
Summer 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none">HPRS Summer Institute (required for scholars, in person, 1 week in July 2021, in Baltimore, MD)Interactions with national health policy expertsLeadership training
Fall 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Online course: Policy analysis and synthesis, methods for evaluating the impact of policy on health
Spring 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none">RWJF Leadership Institute (required for scholars, in person, Spring 2022: date and location TBD)Online course: Tools for translating research into policy and advocacy, implementation and dissemination research
Summer 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none">HPRS Summer Institute (required for scholars, in person, 1 week in July 2022, in Baltimore, MD)Health Policy Case CompetitionInteraction with national policymakersMedia and communications training

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Leadership Training
Fall 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Online seminar: Leadership training, communication and dissemination
Spring 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• RWJF Leadership Institute (required for scholars, in person, Spring 2023: date and location TBD)• Online seminar: Leadership training, communication and dissemination
Summer 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• HPRS Summer Institute (required for scholars, in person, 1 week in July 2023, in Baltimore, MD)• Interact with national policymakers
Fall 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Online seminar: Professional development, contemporary issues in health policy research• Peer-led Dissertation Writing Accountability Groups• Online seminar: Professional development sessions, policy topic discussions
Spring 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• RWJF Leadership Institute (required for scholars, in person, Spring 2024: date and location TBD)• Peer-led Dissertation Writing Accountability Groups• Online seminar: Professional development sessions, policy topic discussion
Summer 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• HPRS Graduation Celebration• Transitioning to HPRS Alumni

Participants will also have an opportunity to apply and be invited to participate in a writing retreat, typically held twice each year in January and August, as well as other HPRS programming. In addition to in-person gatherings such as the annual Leadership Institute, fall institute (year 1 only), and weeklong annual summer institutes, participants should anticipate spending up to five to 10 hours per month during the academic year on program-related activities. Scholars will also have numerous opportunities to connect with networks of HPRS scholars across cohorts, across other RWJF leadership programs, and with experts nationwide.

Program Goals

After Health Policy Research Scholars program completion, the scholar should:

- Have extensive knowledge of the multiple determinants of health.
- Be able to apply research and interdisciplinary collaboration skills to engage multiple sectors (e.g., policy, education; business; communities; institutions; and agencies) to effectively translate research findings that will inform health policies leading to health equity.
- Use strategies to leverage diverse interdisciplinary networks of researchers.
- Have the opportunity to establish meaningful and sustained relationships and collaborations with other RWJF change leaders and programs.

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- Have the opportunity to contribute to research and a national dialogue on health policy and equity leading to a Culture of Health.

Home Institution Mentor

At the time of application, applicants must identify a faculty mentor at their home institution. This person would ideally be the applicant's academic adviser, but can also be the applicant's doctoral program director. The applicant's home institution is the doctoral-degree-granting institution. The applicant's home institution mentor will be asked to confirm serving in this role in a written agreement. The home institution mentor will:

- Support and be a champion for the scholar's participation in HPRS;
- Agree to partner with the national program center (NPC) to support the scholar's participation in HPRS so that it elevates their scholarship and doctoral training;
- Be responsible for academic support and career guidance at the scholar's home institution, where the scholar is completing his or her doctoral program;
- Have periodic meetings with the scholar about the HPRS experience;
- Be required to participate in an onboarding webinar in September or October 2020, and an annual check-in webinar meeting that includes the scholar and HPRS NPC; and,
- Receive a yearly honorarium of \$500.

WHAT IS A HOME INSTITUTION?

A home institution is the scholar's degree-granting institution. A home institution must possess the administrative and financial capacity and experience to accept the award and be:

- Based in the United States or its territories;
- Willing to receive the funds from RWJF; and
- Able to distribute funds in a manner that is consistent with RWJF policies (described in "How Can You Use Health Policy Research Scholars Grant Funds?").

The home institution will be responsible for signing a letter of agreement with RWJF and submitting brief annual financial reports to the Foundation.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE FOR THE HEALTH POLICY RESEARCH SCHOLARS PROGRAM?

- Applicants must be a full-time second or third year¹ doctoral student as of fall 2020 at a degree-granting institution based in the United States or its territories;
- Applicants must have at least three (3) academic years remaining in their doctoral program and do not expect to graduate before spring/summer 2023;
- Applicants must be from populations underrepresented in specific doctoral disciplines and/or marginalized backgrounds. Examples of eligible individuals include, but are not limited to: first-generation college graduates; individuals from lower socioeconomic backgrounds; individuals from communities of color; and individuals with disabilities;

¹ Third-year students are only being accepted in the 2020 cohort. After that time, only second-year doctoral students will be eligible.

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- Applicants cannot be a recipient of a national fellowship program that prohibits participation in additional programs, such as HPRS;
- Applicants must be at least 21 years old as of September 1, 2020;
- Federal, state, tribal and local government employees are eligible to apply unless they are considered government officials² under Section 4946 of the Internal Revenue Code;
- Applicants must be U.S. citizens, permanent residents, or individuals granted Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) status by the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services at the time of application. As federal policy or laws change, we may need to consider adjustments in eligibility and grant terms;
- Applicants cannot be related by blood or marriage to any Officer³ or Trustee of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, or be a descendant of its founder, Robert Wood Johnson.

How do we choose scholars for this program?

If you're passionate about your leadership journey, and you'd like to be among the scholars chosen from the many applications we receive each year for the Health Policy Research Scholars program, you'll need to:

- Meet the eligibility criteria described above;
- Put together and submit application materials—according to the guidelines provided in the online application system;
- Commit to attending all scheduled activities, including in-person meetings.

How will we choose the leaders from the applications we receive for the next cohort of Health Policy Research Scholars? We will consider how you:

- Are committed to conducting research that is aligned with the needs of communities, has health equity at its center, and is actionable;
- Are interested in translating your research into evidence-informed health policy;
- Are interested and willing to use interdisciplinary research approaches;
- Want to use research and leadership skills to become a change agent for more equitable and actionable research that will inform policy change;

² For these purposes, a government official is defined as any person who holds one of the following:

- (a) An elective public office in the executive or legislative branch of the Government of the United States.
- (b) An office in the executive or judicial branch of the Government of the United States, appointment to which was made by the President.
- (c) A position in the executive, legislative, or judicial branch of the Government of the United States—(A) which is listed in schedule C of rule VI of the Civil Service Rules; or (B) the compensation for which is equal to or greater than the lowest rate of basic pay for the Senior Executive Service under section 5382 of title 5, United States Code.
- (d) A position under the House of Representatives or the Senate of the United States held by an individual receiving gross compensation at an annual rate of \$15,000 or more.
- (e) An elective or appointive public office in the executive, legislative, or judicial branch of the government of a State, tribe, possession of the United States, or political subdivision or other area of any of the foregoing, or of the District of Columbia, held by an individual receiving gross compensation at an annual rate of \$20,000 or more, and a significant part of whose activities include "the independent performance of policymaking functions.
- (f) A position as personal or executive assistant or secretary to any of the foregoing or
- (g) A member of the Internal Revenue Service Oversight Board.

³ The Officers are the Chair of the Board of Trustees; President and CEO; Chief of Staff; Executive Vice President; General Counsel; Secretary; Assistant Secretary; Treasurer; Assistant Treasurer; and Chief Investment Officer of the Foundation.

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- Are studying in a field in which policy is a key lever for change—from diverse fields of study outside of health (e.g., urban planning; political science; economics; anthropology; education; social work; sociology) to public health. While full-time doctoral students from public health are eligible to apply, we will limit the number of public health doctoral students selected for the program.

Consideration will also be given to the number of individuals from one home institution within a selected cohort.

As we select the scholars, we will carefully consider the composition of the overall cohort selected in terms of demographics; geographic location; disciplines; and educational background to ensure that the selected scholars have an opportunity for a rich training experience.

HOW DOES THE APPLICATION AND SELECTION PROCESS WORK?

You will submit one application through the RWJF online application and review system. Here's how:

- Gather the materials and take the steps you will need (in addition to the online application) to apply:
 - A maximum of a four-page curriculum vitae (CV).
 - Select a home institution mentor and submit your mentor's CV.
 - Two letters of support, one of which must be written by the home institution faculty mentor.
 - All graduate transcripts.
 - A statement describing any additional financial assistance such as assistantships, fellowships, or grant commitment that the applicant will also receive if selected for the HPRS program.
- If you haven't already done so, first register at [MyRWJF](#).
- Then go to www.rwjf.org/cfp/hprs4 and click on "Apply Online." From there, you'll be able to follow the instructions and use the templates provided online.
- Be sure to allow yourself plenty of time to register for MyRWJF, familiarize yourself with the online submission requirements, gather all your materials, and complete all sections of the application. Because we receive so many applications, staff may not be able to assist all applicants in the final 24 hours before the submission deadline.
- RWJF will accept only those applications that are completed and 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 you experience a problem with the online application system that may prevent you from submitting on time, please notify the program administrator immediately by clicking on the "Contact Us" link found in the "Resources" area on the left side of most screens within the online application site.

Each application will be reviewed by multiple independent reviewers. Reviewers will use transcripts; letters of recommendation; essays; the application itself; and other appropriate materials as the basis for determining the extent to which candidates meet the eligibility requirements and advance in the process. A group of semifinalists will be selected to participate in web-based interviews that will occur in late April through May 2020. Finalists for the program will be selected once all interviews are complete. Finalists will be required to submit additional documentation, including having their home institution complete a form acknowledging its role. Applications that are incomplete by the deadline will not be reviewed.

See "Key Dates and Deadlines" for more details.

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We encourage interested applicants to participate in an optional applicant webinar scheduled for Wednesday, January 29, 2020, at 1–2 p.m. ET. You must [register](#) in advance for this meeting. After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting. The webinar will be recorded and made available to those who are not able to participate.

If you have any questions about the application process, please email the HPRS national program center at hprs@jhu.edu. Be sure to include your full name and phone number. We will make every effort to respond to all inquiries within 24 hours.

AWARD DETAILS

- Number of scholars in the 2020 cohort: up to 60
- Grant funds from RWJF will include:
 - Stipend: \$30,000, per year for up to four years or until you complete your doctoral program (*whichever is sooner*).
 - Administrative fee: Home Institutions may include an administrative fee of \$1,000 per year, \$4,000 in total to the grant amount to cover the administrative costs of managing the award.
- Payment of grant funds: Grant funds are not paid directly to the individual scholar. All grant funds will be paid to an organization (“home institution”).
- Scholars will also be eligible for a competitive dissertation grants of up to \$10,000, as well as competitive conference and research dissemination grants, awarded by the national program center. These funds will be provided directly to the scholars.
- Travel to all HPRS events will be covered by the national program center, upfront when possible or via reimbursement.
- Scholars will only receive payments if they continue to be in good standing according to their home institution’s criteria, maintain full-time student status, have a 3.0 grade point average (if the doctoral program uses grade point averages), and have satisfactory participation in program-related activities. Scholars must also continue to be in good standing with the program, which includes: 1) participating in all online course sessions; 2) completing all required coursework; 3) completing all program-related evaluations/surveys; and 4) attending all in-person program events, unless the scholar has an excused absence that has been approved by the national program center director. Scholars not in good program or academic standing may, at the discretion of the director and/or the Foundation, be restricted in their ability to participate in events or otherwise make use of HPRS resources.

In the event that the scholar changes home institutions during the grant period, the stipend will follow the scholar to the new home institution if the scholar continues to meet the eligibility requirements and the new home institution meets the requirements below. In such a case, additional documentation will be required.

The grant opportunity outlined in this call for applications is contingent upon final funding confirmation from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation for such grants.

HOW CAN YOU USE HEALTH POLICY RESEARCH SCHOLARS GRANT FUNDS?

If you are selected for the Health Policy Research Scholars program, you’ll work with your home institution to determine how the grant funds will be used to support your successful completion of the program. For example, stipends might be used to pay for expenses such as: living or child-care expenses; research expenses or statistical software; registration fees for relevant conferences, workshops, or professional associations; conference, professional development, or research-related travel; equipment such as laptops, tablets, audio recorders or other

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devices needed for research or other program requirements; and supplies including books and other education-related materials.

Grant funding is not intended to replace existing funding such as teaching assistantships, research assistantships, grants, or other education-related support. However, 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.

The scholar is entitled to receive the full amount of the stipend to support their time in the program: \$30,000 per year, per scholar. Home Institutions may include an administrative fee of \$1,000 per year, \$4,000 in total to the grant amount to cover the administrative costs of managing the award. The Foundation will not support any other indirect/overhead charges as part of the award budget.

RWJF policy won't allow you to use grant funds to support clinical trials of unapproved drugs or devices, to construct or renovate facilities, for lobbying, or for political 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. While there is no expectation for participants to publish findings under this leadership program, should they do so, funds to cover the cost of making the resulting publications open access (typically \$2,000–\$5,000 per manuscript) will be made available to the participants independent of this award. Grantees can also consider self-archiving (depositing a free copy of an electronic document online in order to provide open access to it) in the author's own institutional repository or open archive to fulfill this requirement. Visit [SHERPA/RoMEO](#) for more information on self-archiving.

KEY DATES AND DEADLINES

- **January 29, 2020 (1–2 p.m. ET)**
Optional applicant webinar. [Register here](#).
- **March 11, 2020 (3 p.m. ET)**
Deadline for receipt of full applications, including references.
- **Late April–May 2020**
Semifinalist interviews, via web conference.
- **Mid-June 2020**
Notification of finalists.
- **July 9, 2020**
Deadline for receipt of finalist supplemental applications.
- **September 1, 2020**
Program begins. Stipend funding initiated for program participants.
- **Mid-September–early October 2020**
Onboarding webinars for scholars and mentors.

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- **October 9–11, 2020**

Fall Institute, Baltimore, MD. (in-person attendance required for program participants).

- **2020 or 2021 (date TBD by RWJF)**

RWJF Annual Leadership Institute, (on-site attendance required), date and location TBD.

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 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.

EVALUATION

The purpose of evaluation at RWJF is learning and improvement. An independent research group selected by the national program center and RWJF—with funding from RWJF—is conducting an evaluation of the program. RWJF intends for this project to contribute to national efforts to develop leaders who will build a Culture of Health. Therefore, the program will publicly release results from this evaluation. The evaluation team will study the progress the national program center is making in achieving its goals, as well as the impact of components that are unique to the national program center. As a condition of accepting RWJF funds, program participants must participate in the evaluation. Participation in this program includes assisting with necessary data collection to accomplish the evaluation objectives. These data collection efforts may include national program center and participant surveys, data sharing, and other activities.

APPLICANT SURVEY PROCESS

Program applicants may be contacted after the deadline by SSRS, an independent research firm. If you are contacted, you will be 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 SSRS will not impact the funding decision for your application 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.

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PROGRAM DIRECTION

The Health Policy Research Scholars national program center is led by the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health (the “national program center”). The national program center leads the program activities and participant experience, as well as providing direction and technical assistance for the application process and for this program.

Health Policy Research Scholars

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624 N. Broadway, Room 380
Baltimore, MD 21215
Phone: (410) 502-9188
Email: hprs@jhu.edu
Website: <https://healthpolicyresearch-scholars.org/>

Responsible staff members at the national program center are:

- Keshia M. Pollack Porter, PhD, MPH, Professor, Department of Health Policy and Management, Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, *program director*

The responsible staff member at the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation is:

- Shuma R. Panse, MPH, *senior program officer*

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 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/manage-your-subscriptions.html.

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