

## 2022 P4A Call for Proposals

Letter of Intent Deadline: September 7, 2022 (3 p.m. ET)

Full Proposal Deadline: February 1, 2023 (3 p.m. ET)



Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

## Policies to Build and Sustain Economic Security and Wealth for Families and Communities of Color

### BACKGROUND

*To help applicants understand how we are using some terms in this call for proposals, see the frequently asked questions (FAQs) in the online application for further clarification.*

The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) is committed to building a Culture of Health that provides everyone in America a fair and just opportunity for health and well-being. And yet it is clear that we have much work to do to ensure a fair, just, and equitable chance for everyone. Racial disparities in COVID-19 infections and deaths have brought to the forefront well-documented and longstanding inequities in family and community [wealth and opportunity](#). Further, the murder of George Floyd in May 2020 renewed national attention to the police brutality and racial injustice that some Black, Indigenous, and other communities of color have experienced for generations. The health disparities also contributed to national discussions about structural racism and white supremacy in U.S. policies and systems. Upending centuries of policy decisions that perpetuated racism will require significant transformation to elevate the voices of communities historically excluded from decision-making.

RWJF's approach to supporting evidence generation is to [challenge and improve conventional methods](#) and assumptions and source [new ideas that can advance racial justice](#). RWJF funds research that can move policy toward the goals of dismantling structural racism and promoting health equity. Efforts to do this include improving diversity among those engaged in scholarship, increasing quality scholarship focused on solutions to remedy structural inequities, and expanding the body of equity-related content published.

In 2015, RWJF launched the [Policies for Action \(P4A\)](#) research program to support public and private-sector policy research that builds understanding of how economic, social, and health policies advance health and racial equity. In the past seven years, we have funded a significant [evidence base](#) that has helped inform policy solutions, respecting the urgency of the moment to seed studies that will lead to evidence-informed policy in the short- and long-term.

For this call for proposals (CFP), we are focusing on research that explores the impact of policies that could close the racial wealth gap for families and communities that have been impacted by structural racism. Individual and family wealth and related policies closely intersect with approaches to community and collective control or ownership of assets (including land and place-based assets). This includes systems changes that dismantle segregation from opportunity, racialized concentrated poverty, and structural racism in the sectors that develop, govern, and

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finance communities. The racial wealth gap is a direct result of [structural racism in America](#) and is also a root cause of other disparities in health, well-being, and survival. Any systematic approach to eliminating the racial wealth gap requires transformative policies focused on bolstering long-term family and community income streams and building and sustaining generational family and community wealth in [Black](#), [Indigenous](#), [Latinx](#), [Asian American](#), [Native Hawaiian](#), [Pacific Islander](#) and other communities of color. We hope to support community-focused evidence generation to help answer a critical and complex question: How can policymakers create an environment that enables communities and families of color to dream, invest, and design an inclusive economy that is empowering and builds and sustains generational wealth?

### THE PROGRAM

The goal of this P4A CFP is to build the evidence base investigating how national, state, local, tribal, or private-sector policies can reduce large and growing levels of racial inequality in wealth, and significantly improve the financial wellbeing and economic security of families and communities that have been systematically subject to marginalization and disinvestment, and therefore are unable to enjoy a fair and just opportunity to be healthy. By *policies*, we mean not just laws and regulations at the federal, state, local or tribal level, but also private-sector practices, such as those affecting workplaces, neighborhood and community development, and family stability.

**The research funded under this CFP must: (1) focus on the impact or potential impact of a federal, state, local, tribal, or private-sector policy or set of policies (or policy proposals) that advance solutions that could build and sustain income and wealth over the long-term; (2) be intentional about applying a racial justice lens to the policy research processes and outcomes; (3) apply principles of [equitable evaluation](#); and (4) incorporate meaningful and authentic community engagement into the work.**

The policies being considered can be ones that have been implemented or have been proposed or trialed, and whose impacts can be estimated through simulation studies or other innovative approaches. We also welcome policy research that is more developmental, theoretical, or conceptual in nature but has the potential to support policy creation and implementation in ways that can significantly improve racial justice as it relates to wealth.

We tend to support research grants that generate actionable evidence and information about how and how well policies work. We would like research findings to inform and guide legislators; public agencies; public policy advocates; racial justice organizations; community organizers; and others who are developing and implementing policies to create equitable communities.

We offer the following policy research topics to illustrate a few of the many studies that might be funded through this CFP. **This list is not exhaustive** and applicants are strongly encouraged to submit proposals on other policy-related topics and questions:

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- Tax policies, including tax credits, tax exemptions, and tax expenditures, and ways these policies redistribute wealth at the individual, family, organizational, or community levels.
- Housing, housing markets, home ownership, housing finance, community land trusts, and other housing-related policies as wealth and wealth-building mechanisms. This can also extend to other policies relating to community and economic development.
- Policies related to ownership, including land, local capital, commercial property, real estate, and business ownership.
- Other policies that can significantly alter long-term income and wealth trajectories, including reparations, universal basic income, guaranteed income, baby bonds, and other bold, innovative policies.
- Community wealth- and asset-building, including policies that leverage public and private resources to expand individual and family assets; broaden ownership of local capital; promote community banks and other local economic institutions; and retain and return wealth to local communities that have been traditionally subject to exclusion or marginalization.
- Employment and workforce development-related policies, including their effects on children and families. Policy topics might include the changing nature of work/employment, work schedules, pensions, unionization, unemployment insurance, employer-sponsored health insurance, work disability supports, and child care.
- Small business development, business ownership, and entrepreneurship-related policies, including those relating to existing programs and policies (e.g., opportunity zones, community development block grants, small business development centers, minority business development agencies, and rural extension services).
- Exploring how, e.g., wealth, wealth building, wealth inequality, elite capture, or wealth hoarding are understood and experienced by different communities and what types of wealth- or wealth inequality-related problems and solutions are most important to different communities.
- Exploring the impact of culturally based asset-building policies and wealth-creation models anchored in Native culture and historical context.
- Confronting and closing the racial wealth gap for people with disabilities.
- Intersectional approaches that consider the simultaneity of racial wealth gaps and other systems of oppression/resistance (e.g., gender, sexuality, disability).

In addition to carrying out the proposed research activities, each applicant funded under the P4A program will:

- Work and periodically check in with RWJF program officers, the P4A national coordinating center (NCC) at the Urban Institute, and other P4A investigators to identify and leverage

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potential synergies across research projects and to disseminate results broadly;

- Actively participate in research collaboration, dissemination, and translation activities organized by RWJF and the NCC, including research-in-progress webinars, blog posts, podcasts, research meetings, and policy briefings; and
- Attend RWJF's Annual 4Action Conference and Sharing Knowledge conference each year the grant is active.

### TOTAL AWARDS

- \$2 million to \$2.5 million will be awarded through this CFP.
- We recommend that you request the amount of funding you will need to complete your proposed research project and to translate and disseminate the results. The size of the budget will be weighed in relation to the importance and likely contribution of the proposed research. Grants are typically funded for a duration of 24 months and have ranged from \$30,000-\$450,000. Grants cannot exceed 36 months.
- The grant opportunity outlined in this call for proposals is contingent upon final funding confirmation from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation for such grants.

### ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

- Preference will be given 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 or Type III supporting organizations. The Foundation may require additional documentation.
- Applicant organizations must be based in the United States or its territories.
- Awards will be made to organizations, not to individuals.
- We welcome applications from all investigators. The following are especially encouraged to apply:
  - community-led or community-partnered research teams;
  - investigators from diverse backgrounds or with diverse life experiences (e.g., race, gender, class origin/first generation college status, LGBTQI, disability, ethnicity, national origin);

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- investigators from a wide range of disciplines;
- interdisciplinary research teams; or
- first-time applicants for an RWJF grant.

### 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.

### SELECTION CRITERIA

Proposals will be reviewed by a committee composed of RWJF staff, leaders of the P4A NCC, P4A's national advisory committee, and other expert reviewers as needed. Final funding decisions are made by RWJF leadership.

**Letters of intent** will be evaluated based on:

- focus on policies affecting inequality in the racial wealth gap;
- alignment with policy priorities of racial justice organizers and advocates;
- applying a racial justice lens to the policy research processes and outcomes;
- how community engagement is incorporated into the research plan;

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- the strength and feasibility of the research design; and
- capacity to translate research into policy action.

In addition to the above, **full proposals** will be evaluated based on:

- the study's research aims, hypothesis, and rationale;
- the proposed methodology and data sources;
- alignment with principles of equitable evaluation. Applicants should demonstrate that they intend to implement approaches that reflect the principles of equitable evaluation whenever possible, including approaches to defining research questions and conducting research;
- the expected results or outcomes (clearly stated, measurable, and achievable within the proposed time frame);
- the approach to dissemination, communication, and translation of research findings for community members, policymakers, practitioners, or other key audiences that may benefit from your research;
- research qualifications and experience of the investigator(s) and appropriateness of disciplines and perspectives represented, including nontraditional partners; and
- proposed budget and project timeline.

## EVALUATION AND MONITORING

An independent research group selected and funded by RWJF will conduct an evaluation of the program. As a condition of accepting RWJF funds, we require grantees to participate in the evaluation.

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. We may ask principal investigators 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.

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### APPLICANT SURVEY PROCESS

The principal investigator of the proposal may be contacted after the submission deadline by SSRS, an independent research firm. The principal investigator will be asked to complete a brief, online survey about the proposal 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, other direct project expenses, including a limited amount of equipment essential to the project, and indirect costs to support the applicant organization's general operations. In keeping with RWJF policy, funds may *not* be used 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. Additional budget guidelines are provided in the online application materials.

### 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

All proposals for this solicitation must be submitted via the RWJF online system. Visit <http://www.rwjf.org/cfp/p4a5> and use the “Apply Online” link. If you have not already done so, you will be required to register at [MyRWJF.org](http://MyRWJF.org) before you begin the proposal process.

There are two phases in the competitive proposal process:

#### *Phase 1: Letters of Intent*

Applicants must submit a letter of intent of no more than two pages that describes the project

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and includes the amount of funds requested. Letters of intent will be reviewed by staff at RWJF, the NCC, and external experts. The letter of intent should include a brief plan for the proposed project, outlining a clear research question, and proposed data/methods.

### *Phase 2: Full Proposals*

Selected Phase 1 applicants will be invited to submit a full proposal of no more than 10 pages accompanied by a detailed budget, budget narrative, and additional information. This program's national advisory committee makes recommendations about grants to Foundation staff, and RWJF will make all final grant decisions.

Please direct inquiries to:

Policies for Action National Coordinating  
Center at the Urban Institute

Email: [policies4action@urban.org](mailto:policies4action@urban.org)

Website: [www.policiesforaction.org](http://www.policiesforaction.org)

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. Contact the NCC if you need any technical assistance with the application or any other questions on the application process.

RWJF does not provide individual critiques of proposals submitted.

## PROGRAM DIRECTION

Direction and technical assistance for this program are provided by the Urban Institute, which serves as the national coordinating center located at:

### **Policies for Action**

Urban Institute

500 L'Enfant Plaza SW

Washington, DC 20024

Email: [policies4action@urban.org](mailto:policies4action@urban.org)

Website: [www.policiesforaction.org](http://www.policiesforaction.org)

Responsible staff members at the national coordinating center are:

- Lisa Dubay, PhD, *co-director*



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- Laudan Aron, MA, *co-director*
- Katie Chapline, MS, *deputy director*
- Nyequai Harte, MA, *communications manager*
- Joshua Smith, BA, *program manager*

Responsible staff members at the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation are:

- Mona Shah, PhD, MPH, *senior program officer*
- Alexandra Zisser, MSc, *research associate*
- Isabelle Gerard, MPHP, *communications officer*
- Mateusz Szalda, CPA, MAcc, *program financial analyst*

### KEY DATES AND DEADLINES

- **July 26, 2022 (1 p.m.–2:30 p.m. ET)**  
Optional applicant webinar. Registration is required [through this link](#).
- **September 7, 2022 (3 p.m. ET)**  
Deadline for receipt of letters of intent.
- **February 1, 2023 (3 p.m. ET)**  
Deadline for receipt of full proposals.

### APPLICANT DEADLINE POLICY

All proposals for this solicitation must be submitted via the RWJF online system. You will receive an email invitation from [my.rwjf.org](http://my.rwjf.org) with instructions and a link to the RWJF online proposal system. To begin your proposal, select the link in the email and follow the instructions.

All applicants should log in to the system and familiarize themselves with online proposal requirements well before the final submission deadline. Please note that, in the 24-hour period leading up to the proposal deadline, staff may not be able to assist all applicants with any system-related issues. Therefore, we encourage you to submit your proposal well before the deadline so that any unforeseen difficulties or technical problems may be addressed in advance.

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**Late Submissions will not be accepted for any reason.** While late submissions will not be accepted, RWJF may choose, at its sole discretion, to extend the proposal deadline for all applicants. Such extensions generally will be granted only in the event of: (1) a verified issue with the RWJF proposal system that prevented completion and submission of proposals; or (2) a disaster, emergency, or significant internet outage that affects one or more regions. For purposes of this policy, a region is generally considered to be one or more states. RWJF strives to give all applicants any support needed to successfully submit their proposal prior to the deadline. Submission is defined as all sections completed, marked finished, the proposal “submit” button used, and the proposal status shows “Submitted.” If the deadline is extended for any reason, the extension will be posted on the funding opportunity page at [rwjf.org](http://rwjf.org). In addition, an email will be sent to all individuals that have started a proposal in the RWJF online system.

### ABOUT THE ROBERT WOOD JOHNSON FOUNDATION

For 50 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](http://rwjf.org). Follow the Foundation on Twitter at [www.rwjf.org/twitter](http://www.rwjf.org/twitter) or on Facebook at [www.rwjf.org/facebook](http://www.rwjf.org/facebook).

Sign up to receive email alerts on upcoming calls for proposals at [www.rwjf.org/manage-your-subscriptions.html](http://www.rwjf.org/manage-your-subscriptions.html).

50 College Road East  
Princeton, NJ 08540-6614