

2023 Request for Proposals

Proposal Deadline: January 18, 2024 (3 p.m. ET)



Community Solutions for Health Equity

THE FUNDING OPPORTUNITY¹

- Community Solutions for Health Equity (CSHE) is a program of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) launched in the summer of 2019. CSHE is a growing collaborative partnership between community-based organizations across the United States who are working to mitigate healthcare systems barriers and practices that perpetuate health inequities in their local communities.
- The CSHE program works to uplift community histories, viable solutions, and cultural priorities around wellbeing and health justice to inform the conditions changes that are necessary for healthcare systems transformation.
- CSHE accomplishes this work through intentional partnership building and the co-development of effective strategies that build upon existing leadership, community engagement, and cultural knowledge systems.
- The program is guided by a co-created [*theory of change*](#), which emphasizes community agency over institutional decisions and community's own care; collaboration that invites multiple perspectives to the table to build solutions together; processes, structures, and engagement that acknowledge and repair the harm caused by the healthcare system; and amplifying the needs and strengths of patients.
- This program focuses on changing local healthcare system policy and practice (the regulations and procedures that healthcare systems set up for providing care or structuring their work), not government policy (actions and programs a state or local government implements to address community needs).
- Funded partners participating in the program are supported by the CSHE national program office (NPO), the Cultural Wellness Center. The Cultural Wellness Center is a non-profit organization with 27 years' experience in deep community engagement with members of communities of all ages in the restoration of cultural knowledge of origin. The Cultural Wellness Center mission is to unleash the power of people to heal themselves and build community.

The national program office will provide access to transformational technical assistance. Funded partners will continue to participate in strategy and information-sharing activities organized by the national program office, including conference calls, in-person meetings, conferences, and

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webinars. Funded partners will also engage in national communications efforts led by the NPO to bring attention to health equity.

FUNDING DETAILS

- **Type of Award:** Awards funded under this opportunity will be structured as grants.
- **Number of Awards:** Up to 11 awards will be funded.
- **Amount of Award:** Each award will be up to \$300,000.
- **Award Duration:** Awards will be for 2 years.
- **Use of Funds:** Award funds should cover actual costs of the project including personnel and other direct costs. If the grantee is a public charity, grant funds will also cover 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, and for lobbying or political activities. Additional budget guidelines are provided in the online application materials.
- **Payment of Awards:** Payment of the award generally will be based upon spending against approved budgets or milestones (not invoices).

OPEN ACCESS

In order to ensure RWJF-supported research is made accessible to a wide and diverse audience, awardees 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). See our [Open Access policy](#) for more information.

SELECTION CRITERIA

This request for proposals is open only to existing funded partners who are participating in the CSHE program. Funded partners may, but are not required to, include additional collaborators in their grant proposal who did not participate in the program previously. Funded partners may make a change in fiscal sponsorship and still be eligible to receive grant funding. We expect to fund grants that:

- Align with the co-created [theory of change](#) in terms of outcomes and activities
- Build on lessons learned from the first phase of CSHE; and
- Include deep community engagement and community leadership

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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 awardees to participate in the evaluation.

HOW TO APPLY

Proposals for this program 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.

Proposal Narrative

Within the online system, applicants will be asked to submit a proposal narrative.

Please note you will be asked to upload your proposal narrative as a PDF to the Project Proposal Narrative section of the online system. The proposal narrative cannot exceed **12** pages. Please use Arial font at size 11 with line spacing at 1.5.

The proposal narrative should contain the following information:

CSHE 1.0 PROJECT OVERVIEW: Please write a one page summary to capture your experiences with CSHE 1.0; please use the guiding questions below to complete your capture:

1. Reflecting on the past three years with the CSHE program, how would you describe the approach(es) your organization has used to build this project around healthcare systems transformation?
2. How has your experience in building the CSHE program supported and/or challenged your overall organization's work?
3. Provide your CSHE project's major milestones. These could include but is not limited to: healthcare system engagement, community engagement, program staffing, communications, or other milestones in the first three years.

CSHE 2.0 PROPOSED PROJECT PLAN:

1. **Objectives**
 - State the principal objectives for your project for CSHE 2.0.
2. **Activities and Deliverables**
 - Describe your project's approach for the next two years, along with its main activities and related components.
3. **Outcomes**

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Describe the project's expected outcomes, and its alignment with the co-created theory of change. (This theory of change was a CSHE community co creation facilitated by Design Impact)

4. Communications

- Describe your communications plan for advancing the project's objectives for CSHE 2.0.
- Name the target audiences (e.g. community, hospital chief financial officers), the messages you expect to deliver to each audience, and what platforms or strategies will be used to deliver these messages to each audience.

5. Staffing

- Identify the principal project's staff you will need for CSHE 2.0 and the responsibilities of each staff.
- Identify any key partners, consultants and collaborators (if any) necessary to achieve the project's objectives and how they will support the project.

6. Timeline

- In the Supporting Documents section of the proposal, provide an estimated timeline for the project's major milestones, including communications milestones, for CSHE 2.0. Please use your best judgment when projecting the project's timeline. This will not be part of the 12-page proposal narrative. A timeline should be included in the Supporting Documents section of the online application.
 - It is possible to request a no-cost extension if unforeseen circumstances cause a delay or pivot from the original timeline. We know that you will make every effort to meet the project milestones to the best of your abilities

STRATEGY

- ☐ How does the proposed timeline and activities reflect a continuation of the work started in CSHE 1.0 and how will it continue for CSHE 2.0?
- ☐ Explain how the proposed project activities and process will achieve the intended outcomes.
- ☐ Describe what resources and social capital might be needed to sustain the project or extend its benefits after the award period.

RISKS AND CHALLENGES

- ☐ Based on the experience of CSHE 1.0 provide a breakdown of the project's risks and challenges. Please identify what type of risk/challenge you are discussing, e.g., financial, reputational, or implementation. Consider what factors stand in the way of success and what factors support your success.

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Additional documents may be included in an appendix, and are optional.

Selected applicants will be required to submit additional information through the RWJF online system prior to finalizing the award.

Please direct inquiries to:

Name: Mariana Fernandez

Phone: (787) 691-0448

Email: mfernandez@culturalwellnesscenter.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.

Proposal Review

Proposals will be reviewed by RWJF staff and NPO staff. RWJF will make all final funding decisions.

RWJF does not provide individual critiques of proposals submitted.

Program Direction

Direction and technical assistance for this program are provided by the Cultural Wellness Center, which serves as the national program office located at:

Community Solutions for Health Equity

Cultural Wellness Center

2025 Portland Ave

Minneapolis, MN 55404-2654

Phone: (612) 721-5745

Email: kwalker@culturalwellnesscenter.org

Website: www.culturalwellnesscenter.org

Responsible staff members at the national program office are:

- Karla Walker, *executive director*
- Atum Azzahir, *CEO*
- Mariana Fernandez, *communications director*

Responsible staff members at the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation are:

- Emmy Hall Ganos, *deputy director*

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- Melody Esther Tulier, *program officer*
- Maddie Moreira, *program financial analyst*

KEY DATES AND DEADLINES

- **December 6, 2023 (3 p.m. to 4 p.m. ET)**
Community Connection Hour
- **December 13, 2023 (4 p.m. ET)**
Optional applicant budgeting webinar. Please use this [link to join the webinar](#). This session will be recorded.
- **December 14, 2023 (4 p.m. ET)** [Use this link to join this webinar.](#)
Optional office hours with RWJF and CWC/NPO staff
- **January 5, 2024 (3 p.m. ET)** [Use this link to join this webinar.](#)
Optional office hours with RWJF and CWC/NPO staff
- **January 18, 2024 (3 p.m. ET)**
Deadline for receipt of proposals
- **April 1, 2024**
Grant start date

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 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.

Late submissions: 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.” Please get in touch with RWJF right away if you anticipate any significant challenge with

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meeting the application submission deadline. Late submissions may jeopardize an April 1 start date for your grant.

EVALUATION

The purpose of evaluation at RWJF is learning rather than accountability. An independent research group selected and funded by RWJF will conduct an evaluation of the funded project. RWJF intends for this project to contribute to national efforts to transform healthcare. Therefore, the program will publicly release results from this evaluation. The evaluation team will follow principles of equitable evaluation, and study how inclusive, collaborative, community-led efforts can contribute to healthcare system transformation. As a condition of accepting RWJF funds, award recipients must participate in the evaluation. Participation includes assisting with necessary data collection to accomplish the evaluation objectives. These data collection efforts may include interviews or focus groups and reviewing existing written materials.

MONITORING

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

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 abilities, 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.

ABOUT THE ROBERT WOOD JOHNSON FOUNDATION

The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) is committed to improving health and health equity in the United States. In partnership with others, we are working to develop a Culture of Health rooted in equity that provides every individual with a fair and just opportunity to thrive, no

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matter who they are, where they live, or how much money they have. For more information, visit www.rwjf.org.

Sign up to receive email alerts on upcoming calls for proposals at <https://www.rwjf.org/content/rwjf-web/us/en/email-subscriptions.html>

50 College Road East
Princeton, NJ 08540-6614

¹¹ All funding opportunities are contingent upon final funding confirmation from the Foundation. In addition, the Foundation may elect to modify or terminate this funding opportunity if an event or events beyond the Foundation's reasonable control (e.g., change in law; civil disturbance; epidemic, pandemic; or other medical emergency; labor dispute; natural disaster; quarantine; terrorism; war; or other unforeseen events, including, but not limited to, emergencies and nonemergencies) is threatened, occurs; or is continuing that, as determined by the Foundation in its sole discretion, makes the awards under this request for proposals illegal, impossible, impracticable, or otherwise inadvisable under the circumstances.