

# 2011 Call for Proposals

Brief Proposal Deadline: April 27, 2011



Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

## **MOBILIZING ACTION TOWARD COMMUNITY HEALTH: COMMUNITY GRANTS PROGRAM**

### BACKGROUND

Much more than how often we go to the doctor's office, our health depends on where we live, learn, work and play. Do we have access to clean drinking water, smoke-free workplaces, public parks that help us stay fit, and protections from health threats like pandemic flu? These factors play an enormous role in our ability to lead a healthy life.

The challenge, however, is in measuring these factors—and then in identifying the specific changes communities can make that will lead to the most dramatic health improvements.

The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) and the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute (UWPHI) have addressed the measurement challenge with the County Health Rankings (the Rankings). The Rankings are based on a model of population health (See Figure 1 on page 10) that emphasizes the many factors that, if improved, can help communities become healthier places to live, learn, work and play. The County Health Rankings—initiated in February 2010 and scheduled for release again in March 2011—provide the first-ever rankings of overall health of nearly every county in all 50 states. In addition to providing almost every county in the country with easy-to-understand information on data related to health outcomes, the Rankings identify the crucial factors that drive health in communities, such as high-school graduation rates, prevalence of obesity, and percent of children in poverty.

Intended to serve as a call to action, the Rankings have ignited important conversations and activities related to improving health in communities across the country bringing together partners such as policy-makers, business, education, health care and community organizations to identify their community's health needs, assets and priorities and to identify strategies to change the social and physical environments of their residents to improve health. In October 2010, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation approved a new initiative, *Mobilizing Action Toward Community Health* (MATCH), to help communities work together to translate the Rankings into action, and to implement policies and practices proven to improve the factors that most affect health outcomes.

We believe MATCH will catalyze action and collaboration among a range of partners—policy-makers, business, education, health care and community organizations to make a significant and enduring impact on the health of communities throughout America. We envision MATCH as a key part of a strong, effective public health system that builds evidence for what works then transforms that evidence into policies and programs that make it easier for people to be healthy and improve their quality of life no matter where they live.

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## *Important Context*

The goal of MATCH is to strengthen the ability of communities to work together to translate the Rankings into action, and to implement policies and practices proven to improve the factors that most affect health outcomes. Additionally, this initiative seeks to engage funders and partners from a range of sectors, for example, education, commerce or transportation, in local efforts to improve population health. By providing training, technical assistance and connecting communities to best practices and expertise, we expect to advance efforts to improve population health in communities across the country.

UWPHI will manage the overarching strategy for the MATCH initiative with guidance from RWJF to ensure continuity between the Rankings and this new effort. The MATCH initiative focuses on: 1) connecting communities to evidence-informed strategies for action; 2) fostering a nationwide peer learning network that showcases best practices and connects communities to each other and solutions; and 3) delivering technical assistance and training to communities across the nation.

In January 2011 RWJF released a request for proposals to select a MATCH Policy and Advocacy Lead to work collaboratively with UWPHI. The Policy and Advocacy Lead (PAL) will manage the Community Grants program and develop strategies to guide community engagement and local policy and advocacy activities. The Community Grants program is designed to engage local funders and build case examples of communities translating the Rankings into evidence-informed policies and systems change efforts that address the factors that affect health outcomes in communities. Together UWPHI and the PAL will form the MATCH Center.

In addition, UWPHI, in close collaboration with RWJF, will appoint and convene an advisory group to the program. The advisory group members will also serve as ambassadors for the initiative.

## PURPOSE

The MATCH Community Grants program is a keystone of the MATCH initiative and will help illustrate successful models of multisector action to address the many factors that influence health. This call for proposals (CFP) seeks established local, regional, tribal and state coalitions or networks that will implement a multisector action strategy to address one of the social and economic factors described in the *County Health Rankings* model (Figure 1). Social and economic factors such as education and employment can affect health directly and indirectly and those negative effects may accumulate over individuals' lifetimes and continue unbroken through generations. The first round of the Community Grants program will emphasize communities taking action to address the social and economic factors that affect health because these factors have a significant impact on health outcomes—most likely even more than medical care and genetic factors, yet they are often ignored in community health improvement activities.

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Proposed policy and systems change objectives must address one of the following social and economic factors that affect health:

- Education
- Income and Employment
- Family and Social Connectedness
- Community Safety

Applicants must select a strategy that addresses one of the four social and economic areas listed above and must describe how their proposed policy or systems change will influence health outcomes. For examples of policies or systems changes, visit the County Health Ranking website at [www.countyhealthrankings.org](http://www.countyhealthrankings.org) or the *What Works? Policies and Programs to Improve Wisconsin's Health* report available at <http://uwphi.pophealth.wisc.edu/pha/healthiestState/whatWorks.pdf>. These examples are intended to assist, not restrict, applicants in selecting strategies to improve health. Each applicant's proposed strategy should focus on a specific evidence-informed policy or systems change with the goal of improving health outcomes in the community.

In addition to the areas described above applicants are encouraged to consider one or more of the health behaviors factors from the County Health Rankings model. Applicants from communities where activities are already underway to improve health, such as Communities Putting Prevention to Work, should describe how those activities relate to the proposed project and how they will be coordinated.

We also encourage organizations within RWJF's *Aligning Forces for Quality* (AF4Q) communities, including the 17 AF4Q Alliances, to apply for funding through the MATCH Community Grants program. *Aligning Forces* is the Foundation's signature effort to lift the overall quality of health care in targeted communities, reduce racial and ethnic disparities and provide models for national reform. AF4Q asks the people who get care, give care and pay for care to work together toward common, fundamental goals that lead to better care. We believe that there are opportunities to leverage the County Health Rankings to improve the health of *Aligning Forces* communities and the care that is provided to residents.

RWJF is also planning a second, limited funding opportunity in 2011 specifically targeting the 17 AF4Q Alliances to assist in addressing health care and health behavior determinants of health using the County Health Rankings. Only AF4Q Alliances will be eligible to apply. Visit [www.rwjf.org/qualityequality/af4q/index.jsp](http://www.rwjf.org/qualityequality/af4q/index.jsp) to learn more about *Aligning Forces* and view a map of the communities.

Grantees are expected to work as part of a broad coalition or network of multisector partners. Successful applicants must demonstrate coalition or network members' commitment by detailing their roles and contributions to the project. Additionally, applicants will be expected to describe how the coalition or network assessed the health needs and resources of the community and how they, with community input, determined the health priorities and selected the proposed action strategy.

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As part of the MATCH Community Grants program, grantees will be expected to:

- Collaborate with other sectors working on social determinants of health in all aspects of the planning and implementation of the proposed policy/systems change strategy.
- Engage community representatives and advocates from those sectors in the policy/systems change process.
- Educate policy-makers and the public about the proposed policy/system change strategy and incorporate messages about how factors outside medical treatment affect health.
- Advocate for the proposed policy or systems change by using available evidence and by making a persuasive case for how the proposed policy or systems change will improve health factors, outcomes and provide other benefits to the community.
- Work collaboratively with the MATCH Policy and Advocacy Lead, UWPHI and RWJF staff, consultants, technical assistance providers and organizations, and participate in training, communications, and dissemination of lessons learned.
- Secure funding from local, state or regional partners to ensure sustainability of the efforts beyond the RWJF grant funding.

## TOTAL AWARDS

- Up to 14 grants will be awarded in this solicitation.
- Grantees will receive awards up to \$200,000 for up to 24 months to implement their proposed policy or systems change strategy.

## ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

RWJF seeks proposals from organizations that participate in established coalitions or networks that include a wide range of community stakeholders. For purposes of this program, an eligible community is defined as a municipality, county, tribe, district, state or region. Although there is no minimum requirement for population size, initiatives focused on individual-change or that have limited population impact generally would not be considered competitive.

To make America healthier, we believe that it will take efforts from a broad range of organizations—government agencies, businesses, community groups, public health agencies and organizations, hospitals and health care systems, and groups from non-health sectors like education, housing, transportation and agriculture. We are particularly interested in proposals that include broad-based coalition or network participation by government officials and policy-makers; businesses; funders; hospitals and/or public health agencies, or community organizations. Applicants whose primary focus is not health are encouraged to apply provided they are part of a coalition that includes public health expertise.

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The applicant organization is the organization that will, if funded, assume leadership in managing the grant funds and implementing the grant-funded project. However, it is expected that the applicant organization will represent an established coalition or network that includes a wide range of community stakeholders.

To be eligible, an applicant organization must be located in the United States or its territories and be a:

- nonprofit organization that is tax-exempt under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code;
- tribal group recognized by the U.S. federal government; or
- state or local agency.

## MATCHING FUND REQUIREMENTS

To be eligible for the funding described in the “Total Awards” section on page 4, applicants must secure a 50 percent financial match and an additional 50 percent in-kind match from one or more local, state or regional funding partners. The purpose of the match is to expand the funding base and support for the proposed action strategy, increase the sustainability of the effort and to provide resources for activities that the RWJF cannot fund (e.g., lobbying).

### *Matching Funds:*

Matching funds may come from organizations such as independent and private foundations, family and community foundations, corporate foundations and other philanthropies; business partners; coalition member organizations; or from city, county, state and federal funds. However federal funding for the Communities Putting Prevention to Work (CPPW) grants and the Community Transformation Grants (CTG) are not eligible as a source of matching funds.

The MATCH Community Grants program is designed to complement the federal prevention funds that are focused on addressing healthy behaviors, the built environment and clinical care in communities across the nation. Therefore, federal funds through the CPPW and CTG program are not eligible as financial match for this program, but are eligible as in-kind match. Other federal dollars, such as those coming from other agencies or through block grants, are eligible as matching funds. We encourage applicants to secure matching funds from a variety of sources particularly those that can support activities that the RWJF cannot fund (e.g., lobbying).

### *In-kind Support:*

In-kind support is defined as contributed services that have a dollar value, such as a percentage of an individual’s salaried time, office space, duplicating and printing support, etc.

Applicants are expected to secure these matching funds from sources other than RWJF and its grantees.

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At the time of submission, applicants are expected to submit a description of the anticipated match. Upon notification, all finalists will be required to confirm that matching funds have been secured. Written confirmation should be in the form of a grant/funding commitment letter and must be provided to RWJF within seven days of being notified as a finalist in order to move forward in the approval process.

## SELECTION CRITERIA

The MATCH Community Grants Review Committee, comprising RWJF, UWPHI, MATCH Policy and Advocacy Lead staff, and other expert reviewers, will review proposals. All proposals will be screened for eligibility and then reviewed using the following criteria:

- A clearly defined policy/systems change objective that addresses one of the social and economic factors described in the County Health Rankings model.
- A plan with benchmarks for achieving the proposed policy/system change.
- Evidence that the proposed policy/systems change addresses a community need and priority.
- Rationale for how the policy/systems change will improve health outcomes.
- Demonstrated experience in advocacy for policy/systems change.
- Demonstrated partnerships between the applicant organization and coalition or network partners, including engagement and commitment from representatives in business, government and/or non-health sectors.
- Evidence that members of the community affected by the policy or system change have been involved in the development of the proposed action strategy and will be engaged throughout the project.
- A commitment of funds and/or technical assistance by local funding partners.
- Capacity of the grantee organization to implement the proposed project and manage the grant funds.
- Potential for the proposed action strategy to be sustained and valued within the community.
- A budget that aligns spending with objectives and strategies, including evidence of matching dollars, and a time line or calendar of activities.

The RWJF goal is to support a cohort of grantees that are diverse in location and type of organization.

## 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, grantees will be required 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.

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Project directors are expected 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.

## 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, or as a substitute for funds currently being used to support similar activities.

Grantees are expected to include in their budgets travel for two people to participate in two annual grantee meetings, using the Foundation's travel cost estimate of \$1,360 per person for a two-night/two day trip where air travel is required.

## HOW TO APPLY

Applications for this solicitation must be submitted electronically. Visit [www.rwjf.org/cfp/match](http://www.rwjf.org/cfp/match) and use the Apply Online link for this solicitation. If you are not already registered at <http://my.rwjf.org>, you must register before you begin the application process.

There are two stages in the competitive proposal process: (1) applicants submit a brief proposal that describes the project and; if invited, 2) applicants then submit a full proposal, budget, budget narrative, match funding documentation and organizational documents for review. A Web conference will be held on April 5, 2011 to provide applicants with additional information. Interested applicants are encouraged to visit the [www.rwjf.org/cfp/match](http://www.rwjf.org/cfp/match) for more information.

### *Stage 1: Brief Proposals*

Applicants must submit a brief proposal that describes the project and include a one-page preliminary budget. These brief proposals should total no more than five pages in length. The brief proposal must include the following:

- Proposed policy or systems change effort and a brief outline of the actions that might be used to achieve the policy or systems change goal.
- A brief description of the process used to assess and prioritize the community's needs and a description of how the proposed policy or systems change target was selected.
- A brief description of how the proposed project will impact the factors that influence health as well as the expected impact on health outcomes.

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- A description of the applicant organization and its capacity to undertake the project;
- A description of the proposed coalition or network members and a brief description of the group's experience working together.
- A description of the role and experience of each key partner in the project.
- The name, title and contact information for the project director.
- The name, title and contact information of the key partners in the project.
- Estimated total budget request.
- Expected duration of the proposed grant.
- Anticipated funding partners.

## *Stage 2: Full Proposals*

Selected Stage 1 applicants will be invited by e-mail to submit a full proposal accompanied by a budget, budget narrative and additional documentation. Applicants invited to submit a full proposal will be expected to elaborate on the brief proposal. Further description of the proposal requirements will be provided to successful Stage 1 applicants.

For more information on the program and the application requirements, we recommend that all applicants participate in the Web conference scheduled for April 5, 2011. You may also visit [www.rwjf.org/cfp/match](http://www.rwjf.org/cfp/match) to view Frequently Asked Questions.

## PROGRAM DIRECTION

Direction and technical assistance for MATCH are provided by the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute and the MATCH Policy Advocacy Lead.

Responsible staff members at the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation are:

- Michelle Larkin, J.D., M.S., R.N., *team director, Public Health*
- Abbey Cofsky, M.P.H., *program officer*
- Tom Andruszewski, *senior grants administrator*

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

- County Health Rankings: [www.countyhealthrankings.org](http://www.countyhealthrankings.org)
- RWJF Public Health: [www.rwjf.org/publichealth](http://www.rwjf.org/publichealth)

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- What Works? Policies and Programs to Improve Wisconsin's Health:  
<http://uwphi.pophealth.wisc.edu/pha/healthiestState/whatWorks.pdf>

## **KEY DATES AND DEADLINES**

*April 5, 2011 (2 p.m. ET)*

Informational Web conference call. Details can be found at [www.rwjf.org/cfp/match](http://www.rwjf.org/cfp/match). Registration is required.

*April 27, 2011 (3 p.m. ET)*

Deadline for receipt of brief proposals.\*

*Early June, 2011*

Applicants notified if invited to submit a full proposal.

*July 13, 2011 (3 p.m. ET)*

Deadline for receipt of full proposals.\*

*August 8–August 19, 2011*

Site visits (if applicable).

*Early September, 2011*

Notification of finalists.

*October, 2011*

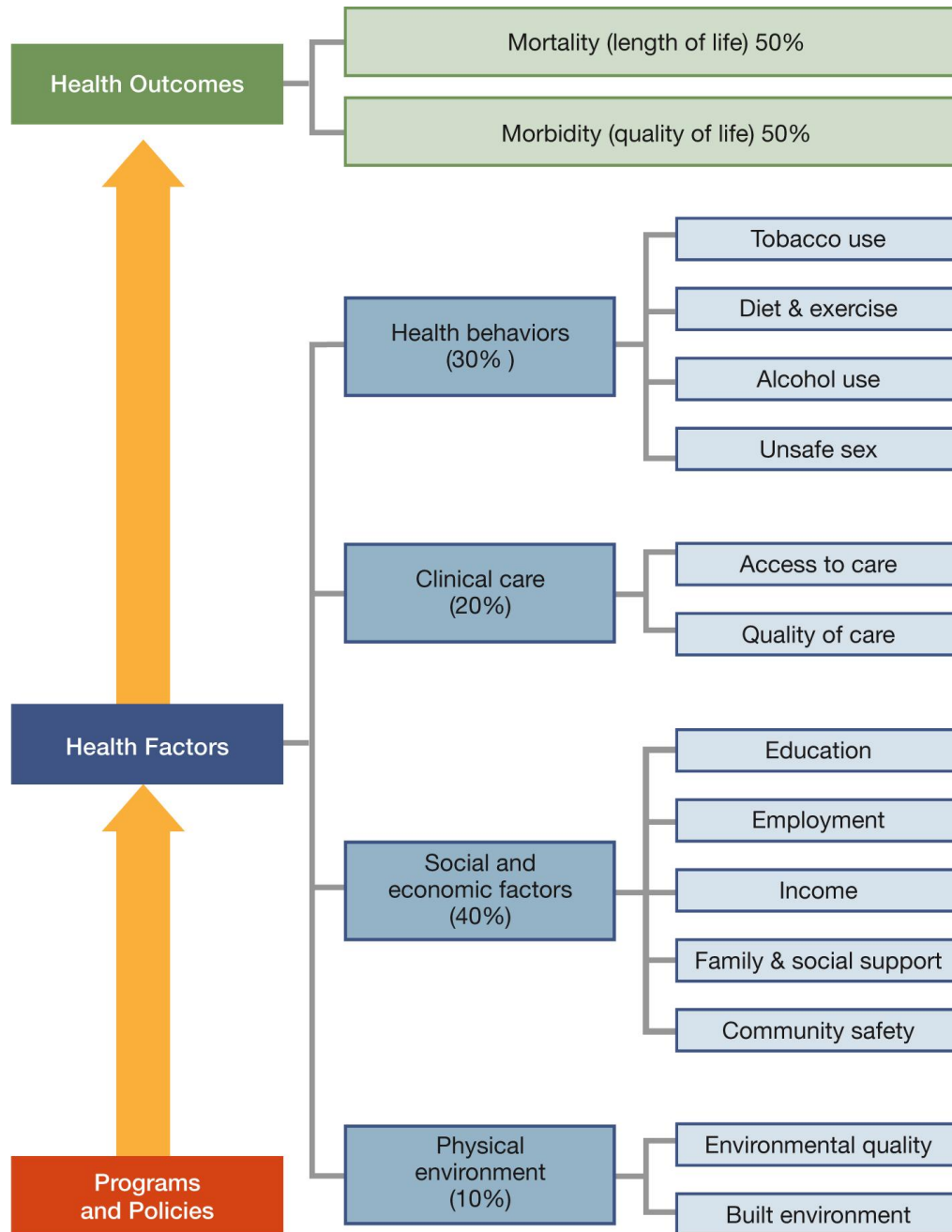
Start of grants.

*\*Applications for this solicitation must be submitted electronically. Visit [www.rwjf.org/cfp/match](http://www.rwjf.org/cfp/match) and use the Apply Online link for this solicitation. If you are not already registered at MyRWJF, you will be required to register before you begin the application process. All applicants should log in to the system and familiarize themselves with online submission requirements well before the final submission deadline. Program 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 proposals.*

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FIGURE 1: COUNTY HEALTH RANKINGS MODEL



County Health Rankings model ©2010 UWPHI

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## ABOUT THE ROBERT WOOD JOHNSON FOUNDATION

The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation focuses on the pressing health and health care issues facing our country. As the nation's largest philanthropy devoted exclusively to improving the health and health care of all Americans, we work with a diverse group of organizations and individuals to identify solutions and achieve comprehensive, meaningful and timely change.

For more than 35 years we've brought experience, commitment and a rigorous, balanced approach to the problems that affect the health and health care of those we serve. When it comes to helping Americans lead healthier lives and get the care they need, we expect to make a difference in your lifetime.

For more information visit [www.rwjf.org](http://www.rwjf.org).

Sign up to receive email alerts on upcoming calls for proposals at <http://my.rwjf.org>.

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