Concept Paper Deadline: Multiple Deadlines—See Page 11



HEALTHY EATING RESEARCH: BUILDING EVIDENCE TO PREVENT CHILDHOOD OBESITY

2015 CALL FOR PROPOSALS - ROUND 9 AND RWJF NEW CONNECTIONS

BACKGROUND

Childhood obesity is one of the most serious threats to the health of our nation. The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF), through its commitment to reversing the childhood obesity epidemic, has provided national leadership in efforts to achieve a healthy weight for all of our nation's children, especially in lower-income communities and communities of color. This landmark work continues today as part of its vision to build a national Culture of Health that will enable all Americans to live longer and healthier lives, now and for generations to come.

Healthy Eating Research: Building Evidence to Prevent Childhood Obesity is a national program of RWJF. The program supports research on environmental and policy strategies with strong potential to promote healthy eating among children to prevent childhood obesity, especially among groups at highest risk for obesity: Black, Latino, American Indian, Asian/Pacific Islander children, and children who live in lower-income communities (urban, suburban, and/or rural). Findings are expected to advance RWJF's efforts to reverse the childhood obesity epidemic, eliminate disparities, and help all children achieve a healthy weight.

This call for proposals (CFP) is for two types of awards aimed at providing advocates, decision-makers, and policymakers with evidence to reverse the childhood obesity epidemic. The award types are: Round 9 grants and RWJF *New Connections* grants awarded through the *Healthy Eating Research* program. The two funding opportunities are described in more detail beginning on page 2.

THE PROGRAM

Healthy Eating Research is an RWJF national program. Its goals are to:

- Establish a research base for policy and environmental factors that influence healthy eating and body weight in children, as well as effective policy and environmental strategies for reversing the childhood obesity epidemic and eliminating disparities.
- Build a vibrant, multidisciplinary field of research and a diverse network of researchers.
- Ensure that findings are communicated effectively to inform policies and guide the development of effective solutions.

Healthy Eating Research issues CFPs to solicit scientifically rigorous, solution-oriented proposals from investigators representing diverse disciplines and backgrounds. The program's overall aims are to identify strategies likely to have important population-level impacts and to provide advocates, decision-makers, and policymakers with evidence to guide and accelerate effective actions to reverse the childhood obesity

Concept Paper Deadline: Multiple Deadlines—See Page 11

epidemic, particularly among children at highest risk. You can learn more about *Healthy Eating Research* at www.healthyeatingresearch.org.

Funding Opportunities

The two types of funding opportunities included in this CFP are:

- Round 9 grants
- RWJF New Connections grants awarded through Healthy Eating Research

The broad topics and types of studies described below apply to both types of grants.

Topics

RWJF funds efforts at the organizational, community, state, and federal levels to change public and institutional policies and environments in ways that promote improved nutrition and physical activity—both of which are critical to energy balance and ensuring that children in America grow up at a healthy weight. RWJF is particularly interested in supporting efforts that will impact those at highest risk (e.g., Black, Latino, American Indian, Asian/Pacific Islander children, and children living in lower-income urban, suburban, and/or rural communities), with the aim of eliminating disparities. This work ranges from large-scale changes at the local, state, or national level to smaller-scale changes taking place at the organizational or community level (e.g., in schools, child-care settings, large and small retail food outlets, restaurants, businesses, and hospitals) that could be replicated and scaled up if effective and have the potential to reach those in greatest need.

Currently, RWJF is focused on five priorities that the evidence suggests are likely to have the greatest impact on childhood obesity and on disparities, in particular. Four of the five priorities are related to food and nutrition:

- 1. Ensure that all children enter kindergarten at a healthy weight.
- 2. Make a healthy school environment the norm and not the exception across the United States.
- 3. Make healthy foods and beverages the affordable, available, and desired choice in all neighborhoods and communities.
- 4. Eliminate the consumption of sugar-sweetened beverages among 0-5 year olds.

For Round 9 grants and RWJF *New Connections* grants awarded through *Healthy Eating Research*, the majority of grant funds (approximately 90%) will be allocated to studies focused on some aspect related to one or more of these four priority areas above. The remaining grant funds will support other topics of established or emerging importance.

Further, research studies must focus on environmental or policy strategies with strong potential to promote healthy eating and reduce excess calorie intake to support children in achieving a healthy weight. Target populations for this CFP are children and adolescents ages 0 to 18 and their families, including

Concept Paper Deadline: Multiple Deadlines—See Page 11

pregnant women and soon-to-be parents, who are members of lower-income and racial and ethnic populations at highest risk for obesity.

The primary goal of this CFP is to fund and communicate strategic and timely research addressing key evidence needed to advance RWJF's priorities—providing advocates, decision-makers, and policymakers with opportune research to guide policy action. Effective advocacy to reverse the childhood obesity epidemic and reduce disparities requires a strong and credible evidence base and the ability to identify effective (and ineffective) policies and environmental strategies.

We rely on researchers' creativity and their responsiveness to the needs of advocates, decision-makers, and policymakers to generate innovative, solution-oriented, policy-relevant environmental and policy studies. Priority will be given to research that has the greatest potential for eliminating ethnic/racial, income, and/or geographic disparities in childhood obesity rates through changes in policy and/or the built environment.

Topics of interest for this CFP include *but are not limited to*:

- Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010
- Supplemental nutrition programs (e.g., Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP))
- policies and programs aimed to increase access to, affordability of, and/or demand for healthy foods and beverages (e.g., healthy food financing initiatives, nutrition prescriptions, pricing incentives/disincentives, regional food systems)
- industry practices related to marketing of infant and toddler foods and beverages, as well as foods and beverages marketed to children and adolescents
- in-store marketing at retail food outlets
- policies and practices in child-care settings, schools, health care settings, and businesses

All applicants are encouraged to visit the *Healthy Eating Research* website at *www.healthyeatingresearch.org* to learn more about the program and view the abstracts for studies previously funded through the program.

Types of Studies

Studies could include any of the following: experimental or quasi-experimental studies; secondary analyses of existing datasets; evaluations of planned interventions or natural experiments; retrospective analyses of apparent policy change successes, especially in settings where body mass index (BMI) data are available to assess effects on BMI/obesity prevalence; case studies; financial, economic, or cost-effectiveness studies; health impact assessments; statistical modeling studies; policy and legal analyses to identify or evaluate promising interventions; quantitative meta-analyses of the relationships between food environments and eating behaviors or weight outcomes; and measurement studies to develop, test, and validate methods and tools.

Concept Paper Deadline: Multiple Deadlines—See Page 11

Descriptions of the Round 9 grants and RWJF *New Connections* grants awarded through *Healthy Eating Research* are outlined below.

Round 9

The Round 9 grants represent the majority of RWJF's investment in research through this program. These grants have a two-stage application process, including an initial three-page concept paper and subsequent full proposal (if invited).

RWJF New Connections Grants Awarded Through Healthy Eating Research

These grants are to support policy-relevant research of early-career investigators from historically disadvantaged and underrepresented communities. For the purpose of this CFP, only new investigators, defined as individuals who received their doctorate or terminal degree within 10 years prior to the award date for the grant (after December 15, 2005), are eligible to apply for these awards.

Eligible researchers include individuals from ethnic or racial minority or lower-income communities, first-generation college graduates, or others who historically have been disadvantaged and underrepresented in research disciplines supported by RWJF. (See full *eligibility criteria* starting on page 6.)

This funding opportunity is offered in collaboration with RWJF's *New Connections* program (*www.rwjf-newconnections.org*), which is designed to expand the diversity of perspectives that inform RWJF programming and introduce new researchers and scholars to the Foundation.

The grants will support research development of investigators who are in the early stages of a research career and bring enriching perspectives and experiences to the childhood obesity research field. Researchers who are eligible to apply for RWJF *New Connections* grants awarded through *Healthy Eating Research* also are eligible to apply for the larger-scale Round 9 grants, but not simultaneously for the same research proposal. Investigators who are awarded RWJF *New Connections* grants through *Healthy Eating Research* will become part of a broader network of researchers representing both of these RWJF programs. Grantees will be eligible to participate in all RWJF *New Connections* and *Healthy Eating Research* meetings, training and networking events, and technical assistance offerings.

Mentoring for RWJF *New Connections* investigators funded through *Healthy Eating Research* will be coordinated and funded by the *Healthy Eating Research* national program office. Applicants for RWJF *New Connections* grants through *Healthy Eating Research* are required to identify a proposed mentor in their application materials. Staff members from the national program office are available to provide advice and guidance to applicants on identifying an appropriate mentor for the proposed research project. The proposed mentor needs to have expertise appropriate to the investigator's specific research project and broad career development needs. The proposed mentor must submit a letter of support with the applicant's full proposal (if invited). It is recommended that the applicant ask his or her proposed mentor to review and provide feedback on the concept paper and subsequent full proposal (if invited) prior to submission.

RWJF *New Connections* grants awarded through *Healthy Eating Research* have a two-stage application process, including an initial three-page concept paper and subsequent full proposal (if invited).

Concept Paper Deadline: Multiple Deadlines—See Page 11

Overall Study Guidelines for all Grants

- The two types of awards described in this CFP (Round 9 and RWJF New Connections grants awarded through Healthy Eating Research) cover the same topic areas and types of studies. Given the limited scope and short duration of these projects, measures of changes in weight or BMI are not required, but are encouraged if data are available. Objective measures of food sales or purchases, dietary consumption (especially consumption of non-nutritive excess calories), or estimated reductions in average daily caloric intake are encouraged. Variables likely to affect the impact and feasibility of the policy and environmental changes studied (e.g., demographics, community characteristics, and other contextual variables) should be assessed.
- Target populations are children and adolescents ages 0 to 18 and their families, including pregnant women and soon-to-be parents, from lower-income (including urban, suburban, and/or rural communities) and racial and ethnic populations at highest risk for obesity.
- Studies focused solely on behavior change at the individual level or nutrition education interventions will not be funded. However, studies could compare the impact of environmental changes with or without nutrition education or promotion, or identify the most effective components of a multicomponent intervention.
- Studies conducted in real-world settings are preferred. Experimental studies or laboratory simulations
 must show promise for generalization to real-world settings, especially in lower-income and racial
 and ethnic minority populations. Retrospective studies of policy changes that can reliably evaluate
 effects on reducing excess calorie intake, youth obesity prevalence, or BMI are particularly
 encouraged.
- Researchers should seek input from relevant stakeholders—such as advocates, policymakers, school or community leaders, parents, or children—to develop feasible and policy-relevant studies.
 Proposals should describe the strategies that will be used to communicate research results. Applicants must include at least one representative of the community or stakeholder group targeted (e.g., advocate, community leader, policymaker) as an ongoing adviser. Healthy Eating Research may recommend additional stakeholders whose input would be critical to the success of the research project.
- Specific plans should be outlined for communicating and disseminating research results to advocates, decision-makers, policymakers, relevant stakeholders, and scientists.
- Awards will be made directly to the principal investigator's home institution. Indirect costs (up to 12%) are included in the total project awards.
- Proposed projects may be conducted as supplements to existing studies. Project co-funding is
 welcome; sources and amounts must be fully described in the proposal. The added value of the
 proposed research grant should be clearly described.

TOTAL AWARDS

Approximately \$2.75 million will be awarded under this CFP for the two award types. The anticipated allocation of funds is as follows:

Concept Paper Deadline: Multiple Deadlines—See Page 11

Round 9 Grants

Approximately \$2.55 million will be awarded through Round 9. Each grant will award up to \$190,000 for a maximum funding period of 18 months.

RWJF New Connections Grants Awarded Through Healthy Eating Research

Up to two RWJF *New Connections* grants will be awarded through the *Healthy Eating Research* program in this round of funding. Awards will be for 12- to 18-month grants of up to \$100,000 each.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

For All Grant Opportunities

- 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.
- The focus of this program is the United States; studies in other countries will be considered only to the extent that they may directly inform U.S. policy.

Consistent with RWJF values, this program embraces diversity and inclusion across multiple dimensions, such as race, ethnicity, gender, disability, age, and socioeconomic status. We strongly encourage applications from investigators who will help us expand the perspectives and experiences we bring to our work. We believe that the more we include diverse perspectives and experiences in our work, the more successful we will be as we strive together to build a Culture of Health, enabling all in our diverse society to lead healthy lives, now, and for generations to come.

For RWJF New Connections Grants Awarded Through Healthy Eating Research
In addition to the eligibility criteria listed above, investigators must, at the time of application:

- have completed a doctorate or terminal degree (e.g., PhD, MD, JD) within 10 years of the start date of the grant (after December 15, 2005);
- be a U.S. Citizen or permanent resident;
- not be related by blood or marriage to any Officer or Trustee of RWJF, or be a descendant of its founder, Robert Wood Johnson. The Officers are the Chairman of the Board of Trustees; President and CEO; Chief of Staff; General Counsel; Secretary; Assistant Secretary; Treasurer; and Assistant Treasurer of the Foundation;
- be affiliated with or sponsored by a university or an organization that is tax-exempt under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code and is not a private foundation under Section 509(a) of the Code. The sponsoring institution must agree to receive and administer the grant;
- be from a group that has been historically disadvantaged or underrepresented in research disciplines supported by RWJF. This includes, but is not limited to, individuals from ethnic and racial minorities historically underrepresented in research disciplines. It also includes persons of all races and

Concept Paper Deadline: Multiple Deadlines—See Page 11

ethnicities who come from groups that have historically been disadvantaged or underrepresented in research disciplines, such as first-generation college graduates and people from lower-income communities. These examples are intended to be illustrative, not exclusive. Applicants who do not fall within one of these categories but who believe they are from a historically disadvantaged or underrepresented background will have an opportunity to describe their individual circumstances as part of the online application process;

- hold a faculty or other research position in a university setting, or hold an equivalent position in a non-university setting, such as an independent research organization;
- demonstrate evidence of research skills relevant to the proposed study;
- propose a project that spans 12 to 18 months in duration;
- devote at least 25 percent of their time to the project; and
- have not received previous funding from RWJF as principal investigator.

SELECTION CRITERIA

Invited full proposals will be reviewed by a committee composed of national program office faculty, a national advisory committee, other expert reviewers, and RWJF senior staff. The committee will use the following criteria to assess proposals:

- ability to identify policies and environmental changes or strategies that hold strong potential to
 produce changes that support all children in achieving a healthy weight while also reducing
 disparities;
- ability to inform RWJF's food/nutrition-related priorities and advocacy efforts regarding childhood obesity;
- relevance and timeliness of the study to inform policy action;
- relevance to the needs of low-resource communities and children in lower-income (including urban, suburban, and/or rural communities) and racial and ethnic minority populations at highest risk for obesity;
- degree to which the strategies are widely applicable, feasible, and sustainable;
- clarity of study goals, hypotheses, methods, and outcomes;
- use of a clear theoretical framework, conceptual model, or rationale;
- scientific rigor of proposed research and analytic methods, including quality of the measures and data to be used:
- research qualifications and experience of the investigator(s) and appropriateness of disciplines and perspectives represented;
- appropriateness of proposed budget and project timeline;

Concept Paper Deadline: Multiple Deadlines—See Page 11

• plans for communicating and disseminating research results to advocates, decision-makers, policymakers, and scientists (e.g., briefs and reports, formal presentations, stakeholder convenings, web-based dissemination efforts, peer-reviewed papers).

A national advisory committee reviews *Healthy Eating Research* proposals and makes funding recommendations to Foundation staff. All funding decisions are made by RWJF. RWJF does not provide individual critiques of proposals submitted.

EVALUATION AND MONITORING

As part of the application process, finalists will be asked to disclose any financial arrangements (e.g., fees, funding, employment, stock holdings) or relationships that might compromise the credibility or perceived credibility of the findings, mirroring the types of disclosure requested by leading journals.

Grantees are required to submit periodic information needed for overall project performance monitoring and management. Grantees are expected to meet RWJF requirements for the submission of narrative and financial reports and bibliographies. Grantees also will be required to respond to periodic surveys and other communications sent from *Healthy Eating Research*.

RWJF may select and fund an independent research group to conduct an evaluation of the *Healthy Eating Research* program. As a condition of accepting RWJF funds, grantees are required to provide information requested for program evaluation activities.

APPLICANT SURVEY PROCESS

To help us measure the effectiveness of RWJF grantmaking and improve the grant application experience, we will survey principal investigators listed in applications submitted under this CFP. Shortly after the application deadline, the principal investigator will be contacted by Princeton Survey Research Associates International (PSRAI), an independent research firm, and 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 PSRAI will not impact the funding decision for the application in any way.

PSRAI will protect the confidentiality of the responses. RWJF will not receive any data that links a name with the survey responses.

If you have any questions about the survey or the use of the data, feel free to email *applicantfeedback@rwjf.org*.

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, 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, for political activities, or as a substitute for funds currently

Concept Paper Deadline: Multiple Deadlines—See Page 11

being used to support similar activities. Principal investigators are expected to participate in annual grantee meetings. The full proposal templates in the RWJF online system contain guidelines for travel budgeting.

HOW TO APPLY

Round 9 Proposals

Applications for this solicitation must be submitted via the RWJF online system. Visit www.rwjf.org/cfp/her9 and use the "Apply Online" link for this solicitation. If you have not already done so, you will be required to register at MyRWJF at http://my.rwjf.org before you begin the application process.

There are two stages in the application process:

Stage 1: Concept Paper

All applicants must submit: 1) a concept paper narrative of up to three pages (1.5 line spacing) describing the study, and 2) biosketches for key personnel. Applicants must follow the instructions and use the templates provided in the RWJF online system.

Stage 2: Full Proposals (if invited)

Selected Stage 1 applicants will be invited to submit a full proposal of up to 15 pages (1.5 line spacing) accompanied by a budget and budget narrative and additional supporting documents. Applicants must follow the instructions and use the templates provided in the RWJF online system.

All proposals must be submitted through the RWJF online system. 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.

Deadlines, requirements for application materials, and information about funding for approved studies are listed in the *Key Dates and Deadlines* section.

RWJF New Connections Proposals Through Healthy Eating Research

Applications for this solicitation must be submitted via the RWJF online system. Visit www.rwjf.org/cfp/hernc8 and use the "Apply Online" link for this solicitation. If you have not already done so, you will be required to register at MyRWJF at http://my.rwjf.org before you begin the application process.

There are two stages in the application process:

Concept Paper Deadline: Multiple Deadlines—See Page 11

Stage 1: Concept Paper

All applicants must submit: 1) a concept paper narrative of up to three pages (1.5 line spacing) describing the study, and 2) biosketches for key personnel. Applicants must follow the instructions and use the templates provided in the RWJF online system.

Stage 2: Full Proposals (if invited)

Selected Stage 1 applicants will be invited to submit a full proposal of up to 15 pages (1.5 line spacing) accompanied by a budget and budget narrative and additional supporting documents. Applicants must follow the instructions and use the templates provided in the RWJF online system.

All proposals must be submitted through the RWJF online system. 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.

Deadlines, requirements for application materials, and information about funding for approved studies are listed in the *Key Dates and Deadlines* section.

Please direct inquiries to:

Healthy Eating Research

Phone: (800) 578-8636

Email: healthyeating@umn.edu

PROGRAM DIRECTION

Direction and technical assistance for this program are provided by Duke University and the University of Minnesota, which serve as the national program office located at:

Healthy Eating Research

Phone: (800) 578-8636

Email: healthyeating@umn.edu

Website: www.healthyeatingresearch.org

Responsible staff members at the national program office are:

- Mary Story, PhD, RD, program director
- Laura Klein, MPH, deputy director
- Lesley Schmidt Sindberg, MPH, senior research coordinator
- Megan Lott, MPH, RDN, senior associate for policy and research
- Lauren Dawson, communications and program coordinator
- Emily Welker, MPH, RD, program coordinator

Concept Paper Deadline: Multiple Deadlines—See Page 11

Responsible staff members at the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation are:

- Tina Kauh, PhD, MS, program officer
- Ginny Ehrlich, DEd, MS, MPH, team director, Childhood Obesity
- John Lumpkin, MD, MPH, senior vice president and director, Targeted Teams
- Janeil A. Mihalow, PhD, MSM, program financial analyst

KEY DATES AND DEADLINES

Round 9 Grants

May 6-August 12, 2015 (3 p.m. ET)

RWJF online system for concept papers will be available to applicants.* Applicants may submit a concept paper for either of the two deadlines listed in the table below. Concept papers submitted after August 12, 2015 (3 p.m. ET) will not be reviewed.

Invited full proposals must be submitted via the RWJF online system.* The full proposal deadline will correspond to the deadline under which the concept paper was submitted, as shown in the table below.

	Concept Papers Due in RWJF Online System*	Applicants Notified as to Whether or Not They are Invited To Submit a Full Proposal	Invited Full Proposals Due in RWJF Online System*	Notification of Finalists	Awards Begin
Deadline 1	June 24, 2015 (3 p.m. ET)	July 8, 2015	August 19, 2015 (3 p.m. ET)	Mid-October 2015	December 15, 2015
Deadline 2	August 12, 2015 (3 p.m. ET)	August 26, 2015	October 7, 2015 (3 p.m. ET)	Early December 2015	February 1, 2016

Spring 2016

Healthy Eating Research Annual Meeting.

^{*} All concept papers and invited full proposals must be submitted via the RWJF online system. Visit www.rwjf.org/cfp/her9 and click on the "Apply Online" link for this solicitation. If you haven't already done so, you will be required to register at MyRWJF at http://my.rwjf.org before you begin the application process. All applicants should log in to the system and familiarize themselves with online application 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. In fairness to all applicants, late submissions will not be accepted.

Concept Paper Deadline: Multiple Deadlines—See Page 11

RWJF New Connections Grants Awarded Through Healthy Eating Research

May 6, 2015

RWJF online system for concept papers will be available to applicants.*

July 1, 2015 (3 p.m. ET)

Deadline for receipt of concept papers.*

July 15, 2015

Applicants will be contacted by email and informed as to whether or not they are invited to submit a full proposal. Invited full proposals must be submitted via the RWJF online system.*

September 9, 2015 (3 p.m. ET)

Deadline for receipt of invited full proposals.*

Early November 2015

Notification of finalists.

December 15, 2015

Awards begin.

Spring 2016

Healthy Eating Research Annual Meeting.

* All concept papers and invited full proposals must be submitted via the RWJF online system. Visit www.rwjf.org/cfp/hernc8 and click on the "Apply Online" link for this solicitation. If you haven't already done so, you will be required to register at MyRWJF at http://my.rwjf.org before you begin the application process. All applicants should log in to the system and familiarize themselves with online application 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. In fairness to all applicants, late submissions will not be accepted.

ABOUT THE ROBERT WOOD JOHNSON FOUNDATION

For more than 40 years the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation has worked to improve health and health care. We are striving to build a national Culture of Health that will enable all to live longer, healthier lives now and for generations to come. For more information, visit 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/funding.

Route 1 and College Road East PO Box 2316 Princeton, NJ 08543-2316