



Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

Jobs to Careers: Promoting Work-Based Learning for Quality Care



2006 Call for Proposals

Proposal Deadline

May 18, 2006

Program Overview

(Please refer to the specific sections for more detail.)

Purpose

Jobs to Careers: Promoting Work-Based Learning for Quality Care will support partnerships to advance and reward the skill and career development of incumbent workers who provide care and services on the front lines of America's health and health care systems. The program seeks to develop and redesign systems that support and institutionalize learning and career advancement and test new models of work-based learning.

Eligibility Criteria (page 9)

Jobs to Careers will support projects that involve emerging or existing partnerships of at least one health or health care employer and at least one educational institution (e.g., a community college) that provides academic credit or an industry-recognized credential. Eligible applicant organizations are employers, educational institutions or other organizations within the partnership that are public entities or nonprofit organizations tax exempt under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Only one organization representing the partnership may submit a proposal.

Key Selection Criteria (page 10)

A complete list of criteria can be found on page 10.

Total Awards

- Up to eight grants will be awarded through this first round of funding.
- Applicants may apply for grants of up to \$425,000 over three years. Up to \$575,000 over three years may be available for a limited number of partnerships in which the number of participating employers, number of affected employees or other circumstances warrants more substantial funds.

Key Dates and Deadlines

- **April 3 (1 p.m. EDT) and April 5, 2006 (3 p.m. EDT)**—Informational Web conferences for interested applicants (optional).
- **May 18, 2006 (3 p.m. EDT)**—Deadline for receipt of full online proposals.
- **June 30, 2006**—Finalists are notified.
- **July 10–July 28, 2006**—Site visits with finalists.
- **September 1, 2006**—Grants are awarded.

How to Apply (page 13)

All proposals must be submitted through the RWJF Grantmaking Online system. For detailed formatting instructions, and to prepare and submit your proposal, please visit <http://grantmaking.rwjf.org/dfw1> prior to drafting your proposal.

For inquiries or application instructions, please contact:

Marta Frank, *Deputy Director*
Jobs to Careers National Program Office
Jobs for the Future
Phone: (617) 728-4446
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www.jtcp.org

Background

Challenges for the Frontline Workforce

A capable and diverse health and health care workforce is necessary to improve the health and health care of all Americans. The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) makes investments to build specific fields within health and health care to help ensure that our nation has a well-trained workforce providing high-quality care and services. As the nation's population ages and grows more diverse, as demand for public health services increases and as new technologies require new skills, stronger systems of human resource development and innovative approaches to learning are needed.

The *Jobs to Careers* initiative was established to meet the needs of workers delivering direct health care and services—a diverse group, such as medical assistants, health educators, laboratory technicians, substance abuse counselors and home health aides—and their employers, who require a skilled and stable frontline workforce. These workers practice in settings such as acute care hospitals, long-term care institutions, behavioral and community health centers, and public and community health organizations. They provide their patients and clients with preventive and early intervention services, chronic illness management strategies, and long-term and post-hospitalization rehabilitative care.

These workers—4.7 million of them in the United States—earn less than \$40,000 per year on average, have a Bachelor's level education or less, and lack credentials that would allow independent practice. (For further description of frontline workforce occupations, see "Defining the Frontline Workforce," available on the RWJF Web site at <http://www.rwjf.org/files/publications/DefiningFrontlineWorkforce.pdf>.)

Frontline workers often receive limited formal training; instead, they often learn from peers and through "trial and error" experience, which may compromise service

and care delivery. Jobs also lack clear standards and competency requirements, with limited supervisor attention to employee skill development and advancement. These factors, combined with workers' perceptions that they are not recognized for their contributions, are associated with high turnover, increased costs and compromised quality.

Supported by research that shows a connection between reduced turnover and increased quality of care and service delivery, employers seeking to train and retain workers more effectively have begun to implement strategies to improve supervision, mentoring, wages and benefits; support training and career ladders; and bolster human resource policies that support skill and career development. The Jobs to Careers initiative seeks to learn from, advance and build on these approaches. Central to the program are the following concepts:

1. *System Redesign.*

Jobs to Careers seeks to support innovations and the redesign of management, educational or operational systems to improve the skill development and career options of frontline workers. Jobs to Careers projects must work toward systems changes such as modifications to workers' roles; revised management and human resource policies and practices; and new working relationships between employers and educational institutions to provide work-based education and training. Improvements in these systems should be both sustainable and institutionalized by employers, educational institutions and other organizations within the partnership. Specific examples could include a community college and health employer jointly creating a job function-related curriculum for work-based learning; agreements among several employers to use the same training material for a certain job classification; a clearly defined career map leading to jobs with higher levels of pay and responsibility; or rewards such as revised release time policies, academic credit and alternative tuition arrangements.

We expect projects to redesign systems so that new methods become routine practice in these institutions, leading to improvements in the health of the populations they serve, the quality of life of their workers, and the strength of the health care system as a whole.

2. *Partnerships.*

To drive systemic change, Jobs to Careers will support partnerships involving employers, educational institutions and other organizations that contribute resources or services to the effective redesign of education and training systems and implementation of proposed programs (e.g., labor unions, Workforce Investment Boards, community agencies). Effective, sustainable changes in the way that frontline workers are trained and advanced cannot be made without institutional changes within each of these organizations, and in their working relationships with each other. For the purposes of this solicitation, "educational institution" refers to any public or private institution that can provide academic credit or an industry-recognized credential (e.g., community, four-year and technical colleges; community-based organizations; certifying or accrediting bodies that provide training).

3. *Work-Based Learning.*

A central goal of Jobs to Careers is to test work-based learning methodologies as a complement to other skill and career development strategies. Work-based learning is one of many approaches to adult learning, and entails methods of education and training that capture, document, formalize and reward the learning that occurs within one's job. Work-based learning methods are developed through new partnerships between employers and educational institutions and use curricula that are driven by workplace needs. They also establish a clear set of structured expectations and competencies, reward workers for progress and achievement, and are embedded in the operations of the employer institution to ensure that learning is continuous. Work-based learning methods

developed by Jobs to Careers projects should result in academic credit or industry-recognized credentials for achievement.

The Program

Jobs to Careers: Promoting Work-Based Learning for Quality Care is a four-year, \$15.3 million national initiative of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, in collaboration with the Hitachi Foundation. It seeks to advance the skill and career development of incumbent workers providing care and services on the front lines of our nation's health and health care systems. The project is based on the belief that a skilled and stable frontline workforce is critical to assuring high-quality care and service delivery for patients and communities. The initiative will support partnerships of employers, educational institutions and other organizations to expand and redesign systems to create lasting improvements in the way that institutions train and advance their frontline workers, and to test new models of education and training that incorporate work-based learning. In addition, Jobs to Careers expects to offer a limited number of research grants under a separate solicitation; more information about this component of the program will be available later in 2006.

Jobs to Careers will award up to eight implementation grants through this first round of funding. Partnerships that include a single employer may apply for grants up to \$425,000 over three years. Up to \$575,000 over three years may be available for a limited number of partnerships in which the number of participating employers, number of affected employees or other circumstances warrants more substantial funds.

1. Grant Requirements and Expected Outcomes.

Proposals should describe projects that will develop, refine and institutionalize systems to enhance the skills and career development of frontline workers and ultimately affect the quality of care and service delivery within the employer institution. Proposals must also describe: (1) the roles of partners; (2) the

roles, demographics and job functions of the project's targeted job categories; (3) the system barriers and potential system improvements to support learning and career advancement of workers in these categories; and (4) the proposed learning vehicles and the role of each in meeting the identified needs of targeted workers, including where the work-based learning will take place. Projects may include a variety of education and training methods and modalities, but must incorporate work-based learning as described earlier in this call for proposals.

Proposals may include up to six months of planning to complete the work necessary to finalize an implementation plan. Planning time may be used to solidify partnerships and service commitments, refine and finalize an employer and employee needs analysis, or conduct other program design work. Applicants submitting proposals that include a planning phase will be asked to identify which project aspects will be finalized during the planning phase and to describe their process for completing that work. The total grant period will be 36 months for all grantees; projects that include a planning phase of six months will have 30 months for implementation. *Please note that only a small number of total grants awarded may include a planning phase.*

Projects supported through the Jobs to Careers program must include activities that:

- target low-wage, frontline health and health care workers in job categories least likely to have educational and advancement opportunities;
- involve frontline worker and supervisor representatives in project decision-making;
- develop and test a work-based learning model and remove barriers that separate teaching and learning from the workplace;
- are accessible to frontline workers and reward workers for successful participation (e.g., through higher wages, improved earning potential, academic credit or certification opportunities);

- advance the skills and knowledge of frontline workers and develop strategies to increase racial and ethnic diversity at higher occupational levels within the employer institution(s); and
- demonstrate how the diversity of the frontline workforce can contribute to improvements in care and service delivery.

By the end of the grant period, successful projects will have:

- adopted policies within all partner organizations that support and institutionalize skill and career development opportunities for frontline workers;
- created and implemented work-based learning models that lead to worker rewards;
- trained an initial cohort of the employer's or employers' frontline workforce;
- mapped career progression opportunities and established clear access methods for front-line workers;
- developed—with assistance from the Jobs to Careers evaluators and national program office staff—metrics to measure the success of the project, including metrics to determine the return on investment for the partnership's employer(s) and others; and
- identified and effectively used multiple sources of funding (including external sources) to support the costs of training and education that will be sustained beyond the grant period.

2. *Evaluation and Monitoring.*

An independent research group selected and funded by RWJF will evaluate the program. As a condition of accepting RWJF funds, grantees will be expected to participate in the evaluation and meet RWJF reporting requirements. Grantees also will be required to submit periodic information needed for overall project performance monitoring and management. Project directors will be required to attend periodic meetings and give progress reports on their grants.

3. *Learning Collaborative and Technical Assistance.*

Grantees will be expected to participate in a national learning collaborative, coordinated by the Jobs to Careers national program office, to share challenges, successes and lessons learned, including two required peer learning meetings each year for employer partners. This national learning collaborative will also include periodic Web-based discussion groups and small group teleconferences. In addition, each grantee will receive individualized technical assistance from the national program office, via phone calls and site visits, to help refine and implement their projects.

Eligibility Criteria

To be eligible for funding, each partnership must include at least one employer and one educational institution. Employers may include a single employer (e.g., a hospital) or a network of employers (e.g., a group of community health centers) that employ frontline workers (as defined on page 3) in settings that include, but are not limited to, acute care hospitals, long-term care institutions, behavioral and community health centers, and public and community health organizations.

Educational institutions may be any public or private institution that can provide academic credit or an industry-recognized credential (e.g., community, four-year and technical colleges; community-based organizations; certifying or accrediting bodies that provide training).

Partnerships are encouraged to include other organizations that contribute resources or services to the success of the partnership, such as labor unions, Workforce Investment Boards and community agencies.

Only one applicant organization representing the partnership may submit a proposal. The applicant organization may be an employer, educational institution, labor union or community organization.

Applicants may be either public entities or nonprofit organizations that are tax exempt under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

Selection Criteria

All proposals will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- A solid understanding of the workforce development needs and barriers of the targeted employees;
- A feasible project design that addresses business and organizational challenges and the related skill development needs of incumbent frontline workers;
- A history of organizational and leadership commitment to the proposed project, including support from chief executives, leaders of human resource departments, supervisors and frontline workers in partner organizations;
- Evidence of commitment to:
 - create or expand learning systems to support structured work-based learning and career development for frontline health and health care workers in job categories least likely to have educational and advancement opportunities;
 - use innovative learning and training strategies for adult learners;
 - map and support career pathways for frontline workers;
 - reward worker achievement with financial rewards, advancement or academic credit or certification; and
 - involve frontline workers and supervisors in planning and decision-making;
- Innovativeness, effectiveness and sustainability of the proposed system changes;
- Evidence of the lead organization's ability to implement the proposed project and system change activities;
- Evidence that additional resources can be secured to help support and sustain the cost of education and training; and
- Evidence of the partnership's ability and commitment to sustain the initiative beyond the funded project period through the adoption of policies and

practices that facilitate effective training and career development for frontline employees.

Proposals requesting a planning phase will also be evaluated on the feasibility of the planning activities resulting in a fully developed implementation plan that incorporates all the grant requirements described earlier.

The program strives to have a balanced portfolio of grantees, and will seek to fund projects from a range of geographic regions, a variety of health and health care settings, and projects that represent a variety of employee groups served.

Use of Grant Funds

Grant funds may be used to support costs associated with the development and implementation of the proposed project. Priorities for use of grant funds include coordinating and supporting partnership functions; analyzing and implementing needed system changes; and developing and testing pilot education or training activities that can be refined, expanded and sustained with matching resources.

Budgets may include planning costs, and need not be divided equally across the three-year grant period. Applicants will be asked to submit a budget narrative that describes how budget items are related to the project plan and systems change activities. In addition, applicants will be asked to describe how activities will be sustained beyond the grant period.

Applicants requesting more than \$425,000 should describe how the additional funds add value to the project in terms of scale of outcomes, depth and breadth of systemic change, opportunities for programmatic innovations, or other benefits. Budgets should also reflect the cash or in-kind matching contribution the partners will contribute in order to implement the proposed project and institutionalize the changes resulting from it.

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.

How to Apply

The application process has two steps: (1) the submission of a full online proposal, line-item budget, budget narrative, work plan, and Collaborating Entities Agreement form describing all partners, their roles, and the resources each organization is committing to the project; and (2) participation in a site visit, if selected as a finalist.

All proposals for this program must be submitted through the RWJF Grantmaking Online system at: <http://grantmaking.rwjf.org/dfw1> no later than 3:00 p.m. EDT on May 18, 2006. Proposals that are mailed, faxed or are received late will NOT be considered.

Please direct all inquiries about the program, selection criteria or application requirements to:

Marta Frank, *Deputy Director*,
Jobs to Careers National Program Office
Jobs for the Future
Phone: (617) 728-4446
E-mail: mfrank@jff.org
www.jtcp.org

This program will develop a National Advisory Committee that makes funding recommendations to Foundation staff. All grant decisions are made by RWJF. The Foundation does not provide individual critiques of submitted proposals.

Program Direction

Direction and technical assistance for this program are provided by the Jobs to Careers national program office (NPO) located at:

Jobs for the Future
88 Broad Street
Boston, MA 02210
Phone: (617) 728-4446
Fax: (617) 728-4857
E-mail: mfrank@jff.org

Responsible staff members at the NPO are:

- Jerry Rubin, M.C.P., *Director*
- Marta Frank, R.N., M.P.A., *Deputy Director*

Responsible staff members at the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation are:

- Victor Capoccia, Ph.D., *Senior Program Officer*
- John Lumpkin, M.D., M.P.H., *Senior Vice President and Director, Health Care Group*
- Jane Lowe, Ph.D., *Senior Program Officer*
- Sallie Petrucci George, M.P.H., *Program Associate*
- Maureen Cozine, M.P.H., *Communications Officer*
- Mary Quinn, *Grants Administrator*

Timetable

March 23, 2006

RWJF Grantmaking Online system is available to applicants.*

April 3, 2006 (1 p.m. EDT)

April 5, 2006 (3 p.m. EDT)

Informational Web conferences for interested applicants (optional).

May 18, 2006 (3 p.m. EDT)

Deadline for receipt of full online proposals.

June 30, 2006

Finalists are notified.

July 10–July 28, 2006

Site visits with finalists.

September 1, 2006

Grants are awarded.

* All proposals must be submitted through the RWJF Grantmaking Online system. 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 applications.

Jobs to Careers is sponsored by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, in collaboration with the Hitachi Foundation.

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, the Foundation works with a diverse group of organizations and individuals to identify solutions and achieve comprehensive, meaningful and timely change. For more than 30 years the Foundation has brought experience, commitment, and a rigorous, balanced approach to the problems that affect the health and health care of those it serves. When it comes to helping Americans lead healthier lives and get the care they need, the Foundation expects to make a difference in your lifetime. For more information, visit www.rwjf.org.

About the Hitachi Foundation

The Hitachi Foundation (www.hitachifoundation.org) is a nonprofit, independent, philanthropic organization established to enhance the well-being of economically isolated people in the United States. We systematically invest in path breaking practices for use by business and nonprofit organizations to mutually address community problems. These practices alleviate conditions that perpetuate poverty and also help to strengthen business.

Sign up to receive e-mail alerts on upcoming calls for proposals at:
<http://subscribe.rwjf.org>.



**Robert Wood Johnson
Foundation**

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