



## 2019 Center for Effective Philanthropy Grantee Perception Report

Since 2004, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) has partnered with the Center for Effective Philanthropy (CEP) to conduct a biennial survey of grantees about their perceptions of, and experiences with, the Foundation. The Foundation's grantees are important collaborators in our efforts to build a Culture of Health, and our success depends significantly on them.

The survey includes a range of questions that are fielded among grantees of more than 275 foundations that participate in the Grantee Perception Report (GPR), as well as some questions that are only asked of RWJF's grantees. Responses to the survey are anonymously aggregated in CEP's GPR, which provides comprehensive, actionable feedback for the Foundation.<sup>1</sup>

The 2019 GPR includes data from grantees who were funded by the Foundation at any point during 2018. CEP fielded the survey in spring 2019; 776 grantees responded, yielding a response rate of 56 percent, which is similar to the median of our peer comparison cohort.

Overall, grantees remain very satisfied with their experiences with the Foundation. However, on many measures in 2019, grantee perceptions have declined compared to the Foundation's 2017 and 2015 findings. At a higher level:

- Grantees believe that the Foundation's efforts to advance a Culture of Health are relevant to their work and that their work is relevant to this vision, but require greater clarity around how this vision is being operationalized through programmatic strategies.

- Ratings on core survey items related to the Foundation's leadership in knowledge and policy are declining.
- The Foundation continues to be distinctive from other funders for its provision of intensive support beyond the grant to a large number of its grantees.
- Grantees' perceptions of the reporting processes are similar to 2017, but their feedback reveals concerns around the utility of interim and annual reports and a desire to be further incorporated in the design and implementation of evaluations.

The charts in this report provide additional information on grantees' perceptions in six key areas: (1) select [Guiding Principles](#) of the Foundation; (2) funder-grantee relationships; (3) communications of the Foundation's goals and strategies; (4) the Foundation's understanding of the social, cultural, or socioeconomic factors that affect grantees' work; (5) the Foundation's reputation and impact, including leadership in knowledge and policy; and (6) the time and effort that grantees spend on different processes.

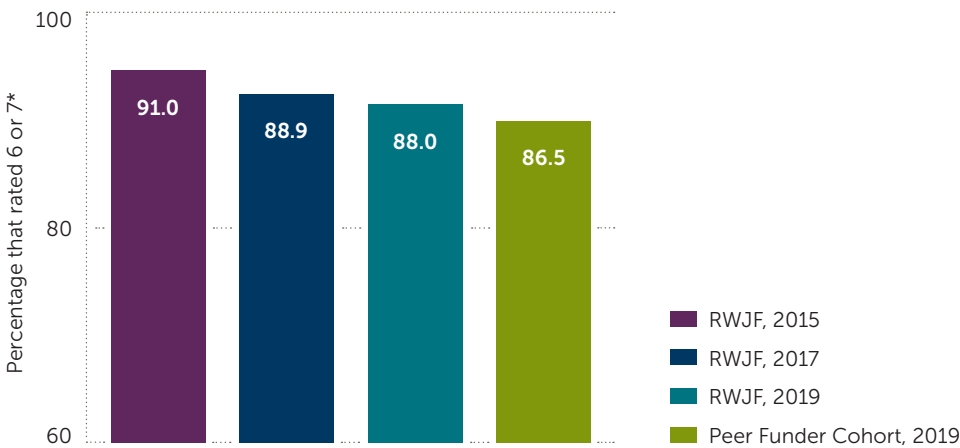
<sup>1</sup> Comparison data from a custom group of large foundations whose grantmaking is similar in scale and scope is provided by CEP; this group consists of: Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation; Carnegie Corporation of New York; Ford Foundation; Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation; John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation; John S. and James L. Knight Foundation; Robert Wood Johnson Foundation; The Atlantic Philanthropies; The California Endowment; The David and Lucile Packard Foundation; The Rockefeller Foundation; The Wallace Foundation; The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation; and W.K. Kellogg Foundation.

## Values

At the Foundation, our Guiding Principles serve as our values and commitment to continue working passionately toward building a Culture of Health. The 2019 GPR findings indicate that grantees generally perceive the following Guiding Principles as being upheld in their interactions with the Foundation or as characteristic of the Foundation.

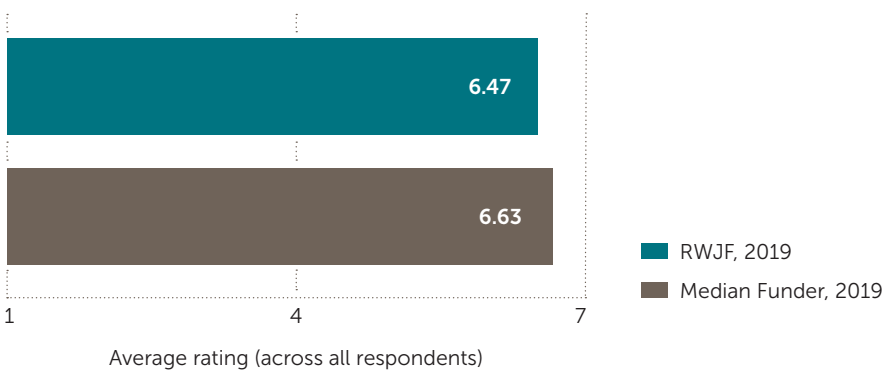
### Guiding Principle #2: We treat everyone with fairness and respect.

#### OVERALL, HOW FAIRLY DID THE FOUNDATION TREAT YOU?\*



\*Note: Responses are recorded on a seven-point Likert scale, where 1=not at all fairly, and 7=extremely fairly.

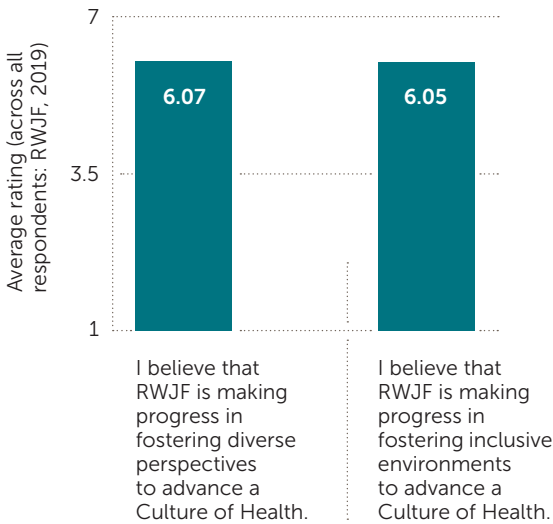
#### TO WHAT EXTENT DID THE FOUNDATION EXHIBIT RESPECTFUL INTERACTION DURING THIS GRANT?\*



\*Note: Responses are recorded on a seven-point Likert scale, where 1=not at all; 4=somewhat; and 7=to a great extent.

## Guiding Principle #4: We cultivate diversity, inclusion, and collaboration.

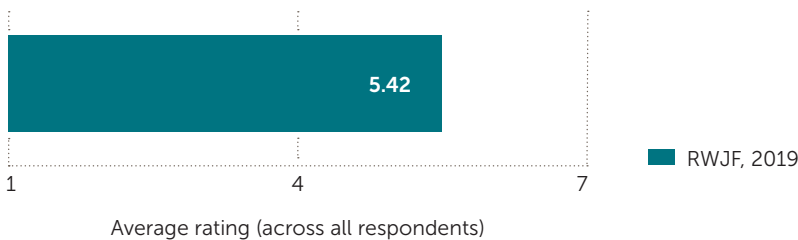
**PLEASE RATE YOUR LEVEL OF AGREEMENT OR DISAGREEMENT WITH EACH OF THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS REGARDING THE FOUNDATION'S WORK TO BUILD A CULTURE OF HEALTH:\***



\*Note: Responses are recorded on a seven-point Likert scale, where 1=strongly disagree; 4=neither agree nor disagree; and 7=strongly agree.

## Guiding Principle #5: We speak out as leaders for what we believe.

**THINKING ABOUT THE ROBERT WOOD JOHNSON FOUNDATION, PLEASE INDICATE HOW STRONGLY YOU ASSOCIATE THE FOUNDATION WITH SPEAKING OUT PUBLICLY ON CURRENT ISSUES RELATED TO HEALTH AND WELL-BEING.\***

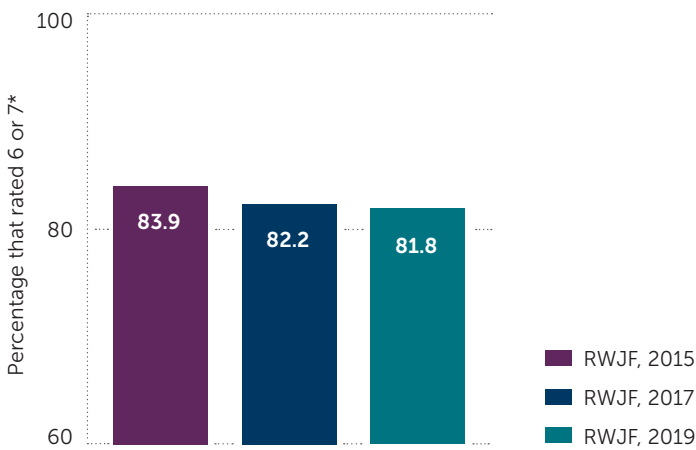


\*Note: Responses are recorded on a seven-point Likert scale, where 1=do not associate with RWJF, and 7=strongly associate with RWJF.

## Relationships

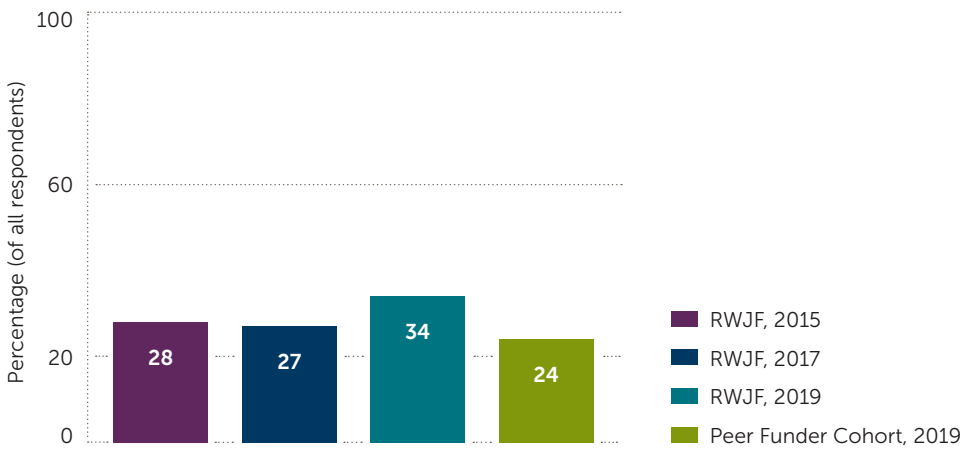
The quality of interactions with and support provided to grantees are fundamental aspects of the Foundation’s work. Although grantees report high levels of satisfaction with the Foundation and receiving a breadth of non-monetary assistance, we saw a decline in grantees’ comfort in approaching the Foundation if a problem arises. As we continue to work to address complex social issues, it is important that our grantees feel comfortable approaching staff on a regular basis.

### OVERALL, HOW SATISFIED ARE YOU WITH YOUR EXPERIENCE WITH THE FOUNDATION?\*

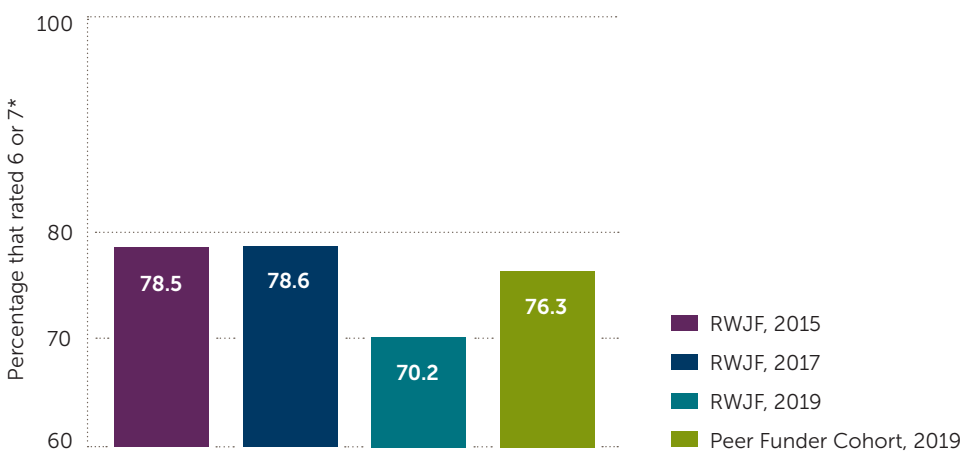


\*Note: Responses are recorded on a seven-point Likert scale, where 1=very dissatisfied, and 7=extremely satisfied.

### PROPORTION OF GRANTEES THAT RECEIVED FIELD-FOCUSED OR COMPREHENSIVE, NON-MONETARY ASSISTANCE.



### HOW COMFORTABLE DO YOU FEEL APPROACHING THE FOUNDATION IF A PROBLEM ARISES?\*

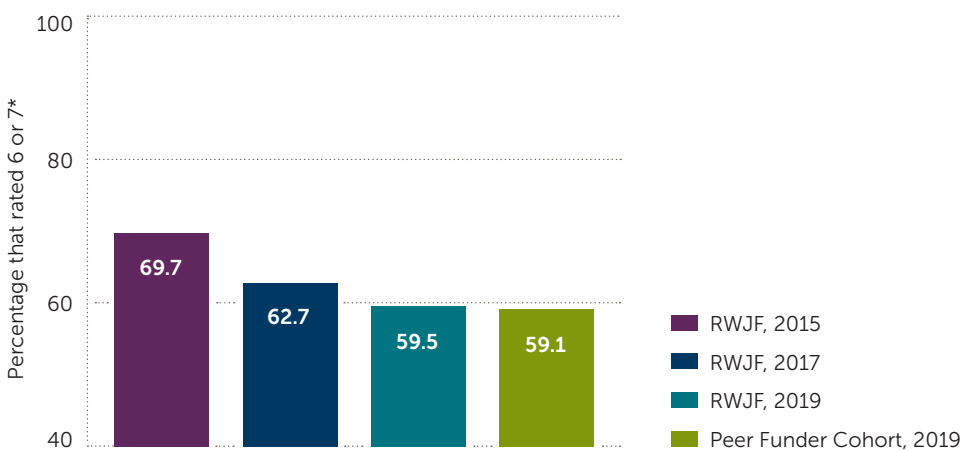


\*Note: Responses are recorded on a seven-point Likert scale, where 1=not at all comfortable, and 7=extremely comfortable.

## Communications

The clarity, consistency, and usefulness of communications related to our goals and strategies is essential for grantees as they strive to build a Culture a Health. The 2019 GPR demonstrates a stronger definitional understanding of key terms related to the Culture of Health vision including “Culture of Health,” “health equity,” and “fair and just opportunity [for health and well-being].” Grantees also report finding individual discussions with Foundation staff as helpful. Grantees’ open-ended comments and the data included below, however, underscore a need for clearer and more frequent communication of our programmatic strategies, particularly how the Foundation is operationalizing the Culture of Health vision and measuring progress over time.

### HOW CLEARLY HAS THE FOUNDATION COMMUNICATED ITS GOALS AND STRATEGY TO YOU?\*

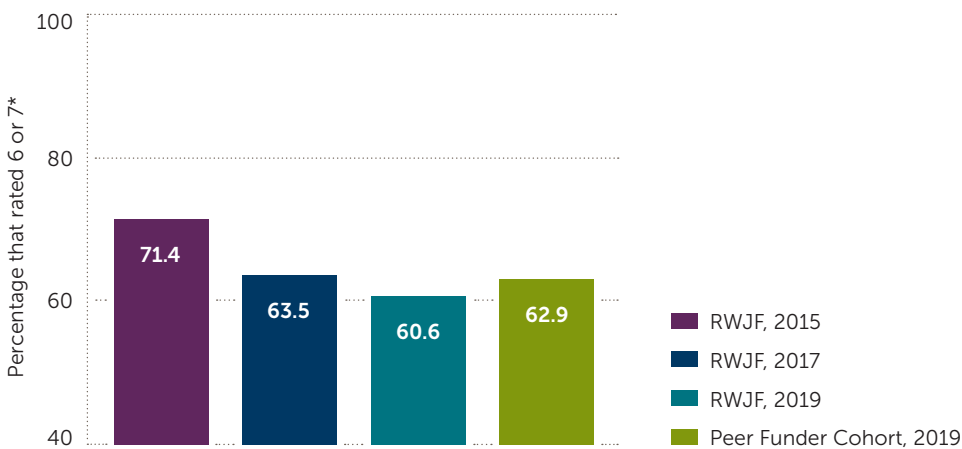


\*Note: Responses are recorded on a seven-point Likert scale, where 1=not at all clearly, and 7=extremely clearly.

## Contextual Understanding

Building a Culture of Health requires the work of many. An understanding of the diverse factors informing and impacting our grantees' work is necessary to catalyze action and collaboration across diverse organizations and sectors. The 2019 data continue to dip from previous years, necessitating thoughtful and candid discussion about the best ways to be responsive to and engage grantees.

### HOW WELL DOES THE FOUNDATION UNDERSTAND THE SOCIAL, CULTURAL, OR SOCIOECONOMIC FACTORS THAT AFFECT YOUR WORK?\*

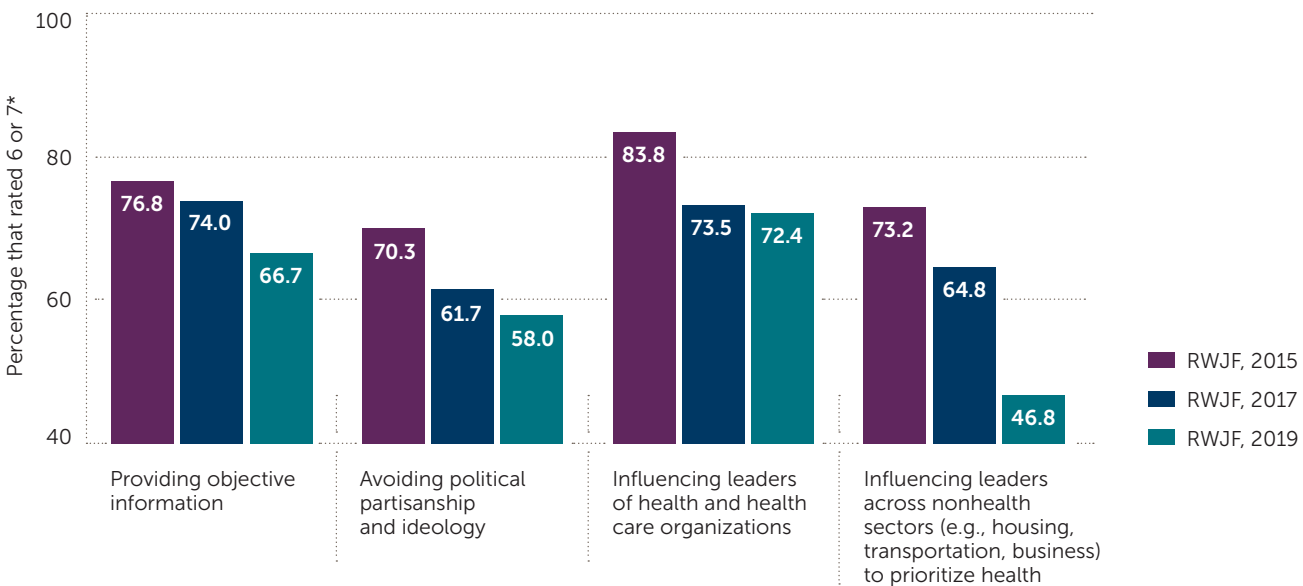


\*Note: Responses are recorded on a seven-point Likert scale, where 1=limited understanding, and 7=thorough understanding.

## Reputation and Impact

The Foundation has a strong legacy of serving as an evidence-based, nonpartisan organization striving to improve the health and well-being of individuals in America. The 2019 data demonstrates mixed perceptions on key elements related to our character and influence. Grantees do, however, continue to associate the Foundation with working to achieve health equity and increasingly believe that the Foundation is making progress in catalyzing greater cross-sector collaboration in pursuit of a Culture of Health.

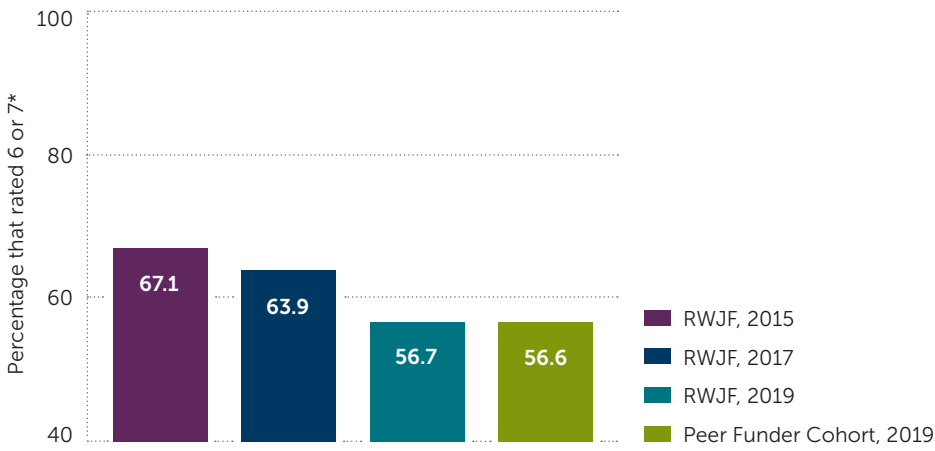
### THINKING ABOUT THE ROBERT WOOD JOHNSON FOUNDATION, PLEASE INDICATE HOW STRONGLY YOU ASSOCIATE THE FOUNDATION WITH EACH OF THE FOLLOWING CHARACTERISTICS:\*



\*Note: Responses are recorded on a seven-point Likert scale, where 1=do not associate with RWJF, and 7=strongly associate with RWJF.

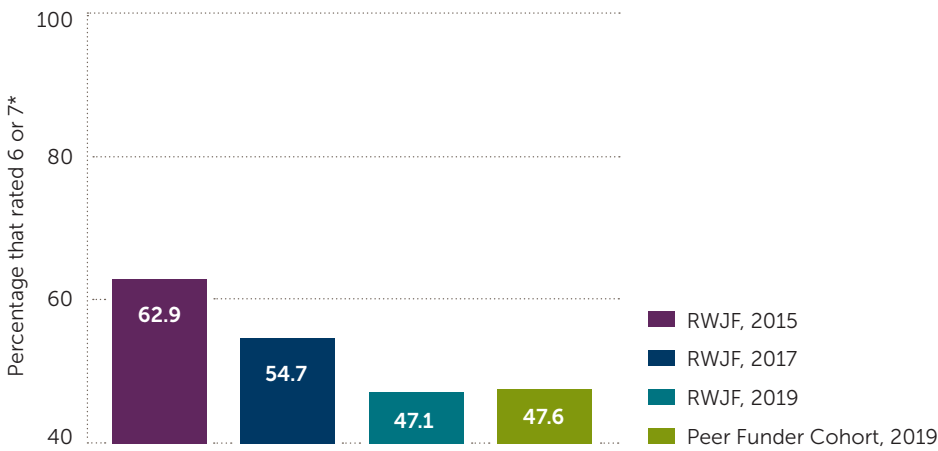


### TO WHAT EXTENT HAS THE FOUNDATION ADVANCED THE STATE OF KNOWLEDGE IN YOUR FIELD?\*



\*Note: Responses are recorded on a seven-point Likert scale, where 1=not at all, and 7=leads the field to new thinking and practice.

### TO WHAT EXTENT HAS THE FOUNDATION AFFECTED PUBLIC POLICY IN YOUR FIELD?\*



\*Note: Responses are recorded on a seven-point Likert scale, where 1=not at all, and 7=major influence on shaping public policy.

## Process

Data on the Foundation’s internal processes continue to provide useful feedback. Unlike past survey findings, the 2019 data demonstrates that grantees are spending relatively similar amounts of time on proposal creation and selection processes and on funder requirements as compared to our peer funder cohort. Open-ended comments reveal grantees’ concerns related to the level of standard indirect rates and grant durations. This feedback is driving a series of internal discussions related to how we can best improve our processes.

### PLEASE ESTIMATE THE TOTAL NUMBER OF HOURS YOU AND YOUR STAFF SPENT ON THE FOLLOWING:

