

Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's Building Local Alignment Initiative Phase One

Frequently Asked Questions

Last updated March 14, 2023

This document provides additional information on a new grant opportunity described in a separate request for information (RFI). The document was prepared by the Grant Advisory Committee for the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's Building Local Alignment Initiative. Please see the [RFI document](#) for information about the initiative and how to apply.

*This FAQ document will be updated regularly by the GAC based on questions and comments from applicants. New questions or updated answers will be listed in **purple font**.*

ACRONYMS USED IN THIS DOCUMENT

Acronym	Meaning
RWJF	Robert Wood Johnson Foundation
BLA	Building Local Alignment: the name of this initiative
GAC	Grant Advisory Committee: the group of external stakeholders overseeing this grantmaking process for the initiative
RFI	Request for Information: the separate document describing the initiative and asking interested applicants to submit information about their organizations/networks
FAQs	Frequently Asked Questions: this document

FAQ SECTIONS

- [Grantee Selection and Eligibility](#)
- [Application Details and Timeline](#)
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GRANTEE SELECTION AND ELIGIBILITY

1. What types of organizations are eligible to apply?

Please see the Request for Information for details on applicant eligibility.

2. Can we apply if we are already a grantee of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation?

Yes.

3. Will applicants from U.S. territories be eligible to apply?

Yes.

4. Who will be reviewing applications for the initiative?

As described in the RFI, the Building Local Alignment (BLA) initiative is using a participatory grantmaking process overseen by a diverse panel of stakeholders external to RWJF. This Grant Advisory Committee (GAC) is designing and overseeing an application process that will result in grants to a set of intermediary organizations; the selected intermediaries, in turn, will regrant funds to community-based organizations and networks.

(Please see pages 3-4 of the RFI for the group's definition of "intermediary organizations.")

The GAC includes 10 individuals representing a broad cross-section of stakeholders (including community organizers, participatory grantmakers, social service/health care system practitioners, scholars, and others). You can view the GAC members [here](#).

5. How will grant decisions be made?

There are two phases to the grantmaking process for intermediary organizations. As described in the RFI, Phase One is focused on assessing organizational fit using responses to the questions in the RFI. From this review, a smaller set of intermediary organizations will be invited to submit more detailed proposals.

Specific questions and criteria for Phase Two of the process will be provided to those organizations at that time, based in part on feedback and suggestions we receive from applicants during Phase One.

The GAC will review all information and proposals provided by applicants and will make all funding decisions, with RWJF conducting any necessary financial and legal due diligence before grant agreements are final.

6. How many intermediaries is the GAC looking to support?

The GAC will support two to three intermediary grantees.

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7. How much will the grants to intermediaries be?

The foundation has **\$4.2 million** total available for this initiative. The GAC will award two to three grants to intermediary organizations for regranting, as well as supporting some related costs for the intermediaries themselves.

8. Is there a word count or other limits on the format or length of applications?

The GAC is asking interested applicants to *briefly* reply to the RFI questions in whatever format—written document, video, audio recording, and/or others—they are most comfortable using.

This response is not a formal proposal; rather, it will be used by the GAC to invite a smaller set of organizations/networks to submit a more detailed application, which will focus on the applicant's proposed approach to the work. *Applications of varying styles will be accepted and will not be judged on length.*

9. Is the initiative interested in supporting an established intermediary or particular sector?

Intermediaries can be from any of the three sectors indicated in the RFI (public health, social services, and health care) OR a community-based organization/network. Grants that the intermediary provides will support community-based organizations and networks engaged in collaboratives. At a minimum, those collaboratives must include public health, social service and health care institutions/organizations as partners but additional sectors (e.g., community development, housing, etc.) can be additional partners (and this is encouraged).

10. Will the grant go to a social service or other established organization?

Please see answer to Question #9 above.

11. Can community development be included as a "sector" (along with public health, social sector and health care organizations/sectors indicated in the RFI)?

Please see answer to Question #9 above.

12. Is this grantmaking program seeking intermediaries that are locally focused, like a nonprofit based in Denver or Dubuque, that then regrant to community organizations in their cities OR national intermediaries that would regrant to organizations in multiple communities around the country?

The initiative is looking to explore what it takes for an intermediary to effectively engage in participatory grantmaking in a way that is deeply rooted in place and resident needs. A big question is whether national intermediaries possess these connections and capacities,

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whether there are more regionally focused intermediaries who could best fill that role, or whether the function is best advanced through a local nonprofit that regrants to neighborhood CBOs. Given that one or all of these entities could meet these criteria, we believe it's best to share with a broad swath of groups that fit the description.

APPLICATION DETAILS AND TIMELINE

13. What is the due date for completed applications?

The GAC is asking all applicants to submit their information by April 24, 2023.

14. Where can I send questions?

Applicants are encouraged to send questions to the GAC at BLA@rwjf.org. The GAC will make every effort to respond to all emails as quickly as possible.

15. What is the timeline for grant decisions?

The GAC will be reviewing responses to the RFI in April and May 2023. By early June, a group of applicants will be invited to submit more detailed proposals; the deadline for submitting these proposals will be in August. The GAC will be making final grant decisions in September and October.

16. Will feedback be provided on applications?

Feedback will not be provided on specific applications. However, the GAC will answer all clarifying questions from applicants as quickly as possible.

17. Whom can we contact for more information?

Please send an email to BLA@rwjf.org with any questions. The GAC will reply to all questions and comments as quickly as possible.

18. Can I share this RFI with other organizations?

Yes by all means. People and organizations should feel free to share the RFI and news about this grant opportunity with anyone they consider a good fit for the project.

ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE FOR APPLICANTS

19. What is the length of the grant period?

This initiative was designed to be a five-year project including initial design and planning in 2022. Following announcement of the GAC's grant decisions in fall of 2023, selected

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intermediaries will have roughly three years to design a participatory grantmaking process, make all grants, and co-design and participate in evaluation/reporting on their work.

20. Will renewal funding be available in subsequent rounds?

This effort was initially designed as a one-time grant opportunity; however, this may change depending on the evaluation of this initial project, as well as fund availability.

21. Is there a central location where I can view information about this initiative and grant?

Yes, please visit the initiative website at www.rwjf.org/buildinglocalalignment.