

# Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Culture of Health Prize Alumni Storytelling Cohort FAQ

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## **About the RWJF Culture of Health Prize Alumni Storytelling Cohort**

### Overview

#### **What is the goal of the Prize Storytelling Cohort?**

The Prize Storytelling Cohort is an opportunity to reengage alumni and share stories about what is possible when communities work to effectively address structural racism and other forms of discrimination to advance health equity. Highlighting these concrete stories of progress and solutions can motivate people to take action to advance health equity.

#### **Who is administering funds? Is this a grant from HRiA?**

HRiA is administering funds as part of the RWJF Culture of Health Prize program. It is a one-year grant from HRiA.

#### **Is this a grant for future work or an award for previous work, like the Prize?**

Funds are provided to awardees to support their ongoing or future local efforts related to storytelling and offset any potential costs incurred during their participation in the Prize Storytelling Cohort. It is not an award for previous work.

#### **What contacts must we provide to participate in the application process?**

Each community must have a **primary contact** and a **cohort participant**. The **primary contact** is the person who submits the application and is responsible for receiving information relevant to the application process from the Prize Storytelling Cohort team. The **cohort participant** is the sole dedicated representative chosen to participate and meet the expectations of the Prize Storytelling Cohort throughout the 12-month program. They will be the sole participant in the cohort. The primary contact and the cohort participant can be the same person.

**Will only one person from each community be involved in the cohort?**

Yes. The cohort participant will be the sole dedicated representative chosen to participate and meet the expectations of the Prize Storytelling Cohort throughout the 12-month program. In the spirit of collaboration and the Prize, the cohort participant will be responsible for communicating and sharing what they've learned with partners.

**Is this a competitive process?**

Yes. There will be up to 10 awards, and there are 55 Prize-winning communities. However, not every community will submit an application.

**Where can I find the RFP and the application portal?**

[Prize Storytelling Cohort RFP](#)

[Prize Storytelling Cohort Portal](#)

## Funding

**Are these funds unrestricted?**

No. It is expected that the award be used to support cohort participation and expenses related to your community's storytelling efforts, including but not limited to staff, local travel, activities, tools, capacities, collateral, and resources. A general narrative summary of the elements, activities, and products the funding was used for will be expected upon completion of the cohort.

**Will the funding go to one organization?**

Yes, HRiA will disperse the funding to a single organization. That organization will be responsible for distributing the funding to any partners as they determine appropriate.

**Is there an expectation that money is split across organizations or within a partnership?**

We recommend that the applicant organization divide the award in ways that support participation and expenses related to your community's storytelling efforts. However, the winning organization decides how to use the funds.

**Can we use funds to pay people to record their own stories?**

Yes. The award should be used to support cohort participation and expenses related to your community's storytelling efforts, including but not limited to staff, local travel, activities, tools, capacities, collateral, and resources.

### **Does the funding need to go to the organization that originally applied for the Prize?**

No, but the primary contact must describe how their organization's current work connects to the collective effort of the original Prize-winning partnership. This is an opportunity for communities that won the RWJF Culture of Health Prize prior to 2023 and have continued any efforts associated with, or evolving from, their Prize-winning work.

### **Is this an annual award?**

No, it is not an annual award. It is a onetime grant.

## **What Does the Application Process Entail?**

### Logistics

#### **What is the application timeline?**

- Submission Period: November 28, 2023, through January 16, 2024, by 1:59 p.m. EST.
  - ✓ Creating a grantmaking/online application portal account
  - ✓ Completing an application (there is an option to save and return to complete)
  - ✓ Includes an essay
  - ✓ Submitting before 2 p.m. EST on January 16, 2024

#### **Applications submitted after 2 p.m. EST will not be considered**

- Notification of applicant status: week of February 12, 2024
- Virtual interviews with finalists: week of March 4, 2024
- Notification of selected participants and start of cohort: April 2024

### **Should only one organization from each Prize-winning community apply?**

It is recommended that a single application from each alumni community be submitted. We encourage people within each alumni community to talk with one another since this is a competitive opportunity. We will not select multiple winners from one alumni community to participate in the Prize Storytelling Cohort. However, we will not disqualify communities if there are multiple applications from a single community.

### **Does my organization need to be one of the initial applicants that received Prize funding when awarded as a Prize winner to apply for the Cohort?**

No, but you must describe how the current work connects to the collective effort of the original Prize-winning partnership.

### **Is this an application that must be completed in one sitting?**

No. You have the option to start your application, save it and return to complete it. You do not have to complete it in one sitting. Please select [The RWJF Culture of Health Prize Alumni Storytelling Cohort](#) to visit the portal.

## Content

### **What are reviewers looking for?**

Reviewers will be looking for applications that:

- Reflect the breadth of work and collaboration happening across the community and across multiple sectors that reflect the spirit of the Prize focus and selection criteria (see Appendix);
- Describe alignment of the ongoing work in the applicant community and the focus of the intended storytelling efforts with the spirit of the 2023 Prize and its selection criteria, especially criterion one: *Addressing structural racism and other structural injustices to create conditions that advance health equity*;
- Demonstrate interest and ability to actively participate in the cohort over the 12-month period, with a clear description of how participation will benefit the community's local change efforts. Please identify one person who will act as cohort participant and will be consistently and actively engaged throughout the cohort; and
- Demonstrate that the proposed cohort participant plays a relevant role in the community to serve as a lead in driving storytelling efforts and local change efforts.

### **Are reviewers considering regional diversity? Will applicants be at a disadvantage if multiple Prize-winning communities from their state apply?**

No. Reviewers will evaluate each application individually.

### **If I come from a large county, region, etc. that won the Prize, can I focus my application on one of our communities instead of the entire county?**

No, the cohort is for the past Prize-winning communities as they've been named historically.

### **Is it important that applicants have national influence?**

No, the cohort is focused on local efforts.

### **In the cohort application, should we repeat all the information included in our Prize-winning application?**

No. However, you will need to show how your current work connects to the collective Prize-winning efforts. A lot may have changed since you won the Prize. We want you to reflect on what is true now.

Your application should include *some* description of your story and your Prize-winning work. You should also describe what your community has done since winning the prize. You should relate it to the prize criteria 1, especially around challenging structural racism, and consider how it reflects the criteria on this year's prize.

### **Will our application be judged against the six new Prize criteria?**

Yes. A successful application will describe how the ongoing work in the applicant community and the focus of the intended storytelling efforts align with the spirit of the 2023 Prize and its selection criteria, especially criterion one: *Addressing structural racism and other structural injustices to create conditions that advance health equity.*

## Cohort Participant

### **Why do we need to select a cohort participant?**

The cohort participant is the one dedicated representative chosen to participate and meet the expectations of the Prize Storytelling Cohort throughout all 12 months. The structure of the cohort requires there be one dedicated person responsible for participating in cohort activities, sharing information to the rest of the community and leading the community's storytelling efforts. The knowledge they gain should be reflected in the community's work.

The cohort participant will be the individual responsible for actively connecting the storytelling work back with relevant community partners and the local change work in the community related to the Prize, engaging them in the storytelling work, lifting up their voices and stories, and strengthening the community's storytelling capacity in a way that will endure beyond the award cycle.

### **Do we need to determine the cohort participant before applying?**

We recommend you select your cohort participant before submitting your application, if at all possible. However, we will not automatically disqualify applications that do not have a cohort participant. Instead, the proposal will be considered in the context of how it addresses the full set of cohort selection criteria.

## **What Happens if My Community Wins?**

### **What's the commitment after being selected for the cohort?**

After winning and becoming a member of the Storytelling Cohort, the community's cohort participant will:

- Participate in select virtual cohort gatherings and one in-person meeting with Spitfire Strategies throughout the award period to aid in development of relationships and peer-to-peer learning across the cohort.

- Participate in four to six virtual cohort-related training and monthly coaching sessions with Spitfire Strategies to strengthen storytelling strategies and skills.
- Engage with Spitfire Strategies, including the above-mentioned monthly coaching sessions over the course of the cohort to shape storytelling strategies and identify storytelling communications opportunities specific to the community's focus and priorities.
- With Spitfire's support, identify, pursue, and enable two communications opportunities (e.g., conferences, public speaking engagements) and leverage four to six local media efforts to gain regional, state, and national audiences and influence over the course of the Prize Storytelling Cohort.
- Actively connect the storytelling work back with relevant community partners and the local change work in the community related to the Prize, engaging them in the storytelling work, lifting up their voices and stories, and strengthening the community's storytelling capacity in a way that will endure beyond the award cycle.
- Attend the 2024 Prize winners celebration event and alumni gathering to share learning from participation in the cohort and stories developed.
- Upon completion of the Prize Storytelling Cohort, present stories, accomplishments, and impact of participation in the cohort on advancing your community's work to the Prize program team.

**Will the community's cohort participant be the face of the cohort?**

No. There's no scheduled Prize Storytelling Cohort media engagement. The cohort participant will only be responsible for participating and engaging in cohort activities, as well as sharing information in their community.

**Will they need to report anything out at the end of the cohort?**

Yes. A general narrative summary of the elements, activities, and products the funding was used for will also be expected upon completion of the cohort. The cohort participant will also need to present stories, accomplishments, and impact of participation in the cohort on advancing your community's work to the Prize program team.

**Whom may I contact for more information?**

For more information on the Prize Storytelling Cohort, please contact HRiA at [CultureOfHealthPrize@HRiA.org](mailto:CultureOfHealthPrize@HRiA.org) or Spitfire Strategies at [CultureOfHealth@SpitfireStrategies.com](http://CultureOfHealth@SpitfireStrategies.com).