

2020 RWJF Culture of Health Prize

Frequently Asked Questions

(Updated August 2019)

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General Prize FAQs

How many Prizes will be given?

Up to ten \$25,000 Prizes will be awarded. Each applicant community will designate a local U.S. governmental entity or tax exempt public charity operating in its community to accept the Prize funds on the community's behalf, should they win.

What are the 2019 Prize finalist communities?

The twelve 2019 Prize finalist communities are:

- Broward County, FL
- Carrollton, GA
- Del Norte County & Tribal Lands, CA
- Fishers, IN
- Gonzales, CA
- Greenville County, SC
- Jersey City, NJ
- Lake County, CO
- Lake Village, AR
- Perth Amboy, NJ
- Sitka, AK
- Vista, CA

The 2019 Prize winners will be announced on November 12, 2019.

Is my community eligible to apply?

The RWJF Culture of Health Prize honors **geographically defined jurisdictions** within the United States* that fall into one of the following categories:

- County, parish, city, town, village, borough, or other municipality with a publicly elected governing body
- Federally-recognized tribe or a state-designated Indian reservation
- Native Hawaiian organization serving and representing the interests of Native Hawaiians in Hawaii
- Region defined as geographically contiguous municipalities, counties, and/or reservations

* Communities within U.S. territories are welcome to apply. Communities in places that may have unique governance structures (such as U.S. territories, Alaska, and Hawaii) should contact the Prize program with eligibility questions well in advance of the application deadline.

For the purposes of applying, a “publicly elected governing body” refers to a general purpose body that is chosen through publicly-held elections and has law making authority over a municipality. For example, this definition would include unincorporated municipalities with elected councils but excludes community boards with appointed members, school districts, parks districts, or other special districts. Submissions representing the work of a single organization or initiative will not be considered. Neighborhoods and states are not eligible to apply.

Are neighborhoods eligible to apply?

Neighborhoods are not eligible to apply. While neighborhoods may not apply on their own, the work of neighborhoods absolutely can be featured as part of the broader efforts being undertaken in towns and cities.

Are communities within U.S. territories eligible to apply?

Yes. Communities within the territories administered by the United States are welcome to apply including, but not limited to, American Samoa, Federated States of Micronesia, Guam, Marshall Islands, Northern Mariana Islands, Palau, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

What is a Native Hawaiian organization?

"Native Hawaiian" means any individual who is a citizen of the United States and a descendant of the aboriginal people who, prior to 1778, occupied and exercised sovereignty in the area that now comprises the State of Hawaii, as evidenced by (A) genealogical records; (B) Kupuna (elders) or Kamaaina (long-term community residents) verification; or (C) certified birth records.

Native Hawaiian organization means a private nonprofit organization that (A) serves the interests of Native Hawaiians; (B) has Native Hawaiians in substantive and policymaking positions within the organization; and (C) is recognized by the Governor of Hawaii for the purpose of planning, conducting, or administering programs (or portions of programs) for the benefit of Native Hawaiians. See, e.g. [U.S. Code, Title 20, Section 7517](#).

How many applications were received for the last round?

For the 2019 competition, 183 applications were received.

Is there a minimum or maximum population size for communities that apply?

No. The program invites applications from all communities that meet the eligibility requirements regardless of population size.

Are you aiming for geographic diversity, or is it possible for multiple communities from one state to win?

Our primary goal is to recognize communities that are working on the forefront of advancing health, opportunity, and equity for all, as exemplified by the six Prize criteria. Thus, multiple communities from the same state can apply and win. Each applicant will be judged individually against the six Prize criteria, not in relation to other applicants or winners located in similar geographic areas.

What if a community submits more than one application?

Collaboration within communities is strongly encouraged, and judges will look favorably on applicants that have done the legwork to bring diverse organizations and partnerships together for a single Phase I submission. In the event there are multiple applications from one community and/or overlapping jurisdictions, each application will be reviewed independently. If two or more applications from the

same community are advanced to Phase II, applicants will be encouraged to work together to submit one Phase II application on behalf of the whole community.

Can the Prize be awarded to two communities with overlapping geographical boundaries?

The Prize is a community-wide award based on a geographical jurisdiction, and it is possible that the Prize can be awarded to two communities with overlapping geographical boundaries if both communities exemplify the Prize criteria, have unique stories and lessons to share, and are engaged in work that fully reflects the submission's eligibility category. For example, a county application that includes a Prize-winning city within its boundaries would be eligible to win for their accomplishments at the county-wide level. A community that is fully geographically encompassed by a larger Prize-winning jurisdiction (e.g., a city within a winning county, or a county within a winning region) is eligible if the larger Prize-winning jurisdiction did not feature the accomplishments of the smaller jurisdiction prominently in the inaugural Prize-winning application.

Our community participated in a previous year's competition but did not win and was not a finalist. May we reapply?

Yes. With the exception of finalists from the previous year's competition and all Prize winners, all past applicants are eligible and encouraged to reapply. Prize-winning communities can only receive the Prize once; once they win, they become part of the ongoing Prize Alumni Network. (A list of Prize-winning communities can be found in the 2020 Call for Applications and at www.rwjf.org/prize.) Finalist communities (those that received a site visit, but did not win the Prize) are asked to sit out at least one round of the competition before reapplying.

What are the past Prize finalist communities?

Past finalist communities by year:

2018

- Bethlehem, PA
- Cincinnati, OH
- Huntington, WV
- Lyon County, NV
- Nashville, TN
- Ruston, LA

2016

- Clayton County, GA
- Grand Rapids, MI
- New Haven, CT
- Oakland, CA
- Philadelphia, PA
- Rancho Cucamonga, CA
- Trenton, NJ
- Tulsa County, OK
- White Mountain Apache Tribe (AZ)

2017

- Bernalillo County, NM
- Ingham County, MI
- Nogales, AZ

2015

- El Paso County, TX
- Itta Bena, MS
- Marin City, CA
- Quad Cities Region, IA/IL
- Lancaster County, PA
- Santa Clara County, CA
- Sonoma County, CA

2014

- Bexar County, TX
- Canton, OH
- East Baton Rouge Parish, LA
- Franklin County, ME
- Sitka, AK
- Van Buren County, IA

2013

- Indianola, MS
- Richmond, CA
- Lucas County, OH
- Scott County, IN
- Somerville, MA

How is the RWJF Culture of Health Prize different from a grant?

The Prize recognizes and celebrates communities' successes – what they already have achieved – whereas grants typically provide funding tied to specific, time-limited goals and objectives aimed at the future. The Prize is a cash award, and community partners can decide together how to use the funds to benefit the community; budget reports to the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) or the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute (UWPHI) on Prize expenditures are not required.

Who should submit the application?

The Prize recognizes communities and applicants who think and act beyond their own individual organizations and initiatives. The application should reflect the work of the whole community, not only one organization or initiative. Community members should select two people, preferably from two different organizations or entities, to serve as contacts on the application.

What are the responsibilities of the contact people on the application?

The contact people listed in the community's Prize application (preferably representing two different organizations or entities to demonstrate a collaborative application), are responsible for ensuring the submission is complete; incomplete applications will be disqualified. **Both contacts will receive all communications about a community's Prize application.** These communications include, but are not limited to, notifications about whether a community has been selected to advance from Phase I to Phase II of the selection process, and if selected for Phase II, whether a community has been selected as a finalist and invited to receive a site visit. The primary contact often serves as the local contact person for site visits; however, this can be delegated to another person or organization.

Will submissions be accepted after the deadline?

To be accepted, applicants must submit completed proposals by the time and date of the deadline. To be fair to all who submit proposals on time, this deadline is strictly enforced. All applicants should log in to my.rwjf.org and familiarize themselves with the application process and the online submission requirements well in advance of the submission deadline. Applicants are also encouraged to begin the process early to allow adequate time to collaborate with community partners. The submission process may be substantially slower when many users are simultaneously trying to submit their applications. Staff may not be able to assist all applicants in the final 24 hours before the submission deadline. Reasons such as lack of Internet connectivity, applicant server problems, confusion about time of deadline, or difficulty working with partners, are not grounds for exceptions.

What is the connection between the Prize and the County Health Rankings & Roadmaps?

The RWJF Culture of Health Prize was originally conceived as part of the County Health Rankings & Roadmaps program (www.countyhealthrankings.org), a collaboration between RWJF and the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute (UWPHI). Based on a [model of population health improvement](#), the County Health Rankings help communities see where they are doing well and where there are opportunities to improve across many factors that influence health and well-being – including health behaviors, clinical care, social and economic factors, and the physical environment. The County Health Rankings & Roadmaps are a call to action – designed to motivate and equip community leaders to work together to build a Culture of Health. Recognizing that every community is on a unique journey toward improving health, opportunity, and equity, and that success stories are as diverse as our nation’s populations, the RWJF Culture of Health Prize was established to shine a light on communities that are on the leading edge of building a Culture of Health and to inspire other communities to learn from their successes and challenges.

Will applicant communities be judged according to their County Health Rankings?

The Prize and its selection criteria are informed by the same [model of population health improvement](#) that underpins the County Health Rankings. This model is referenced in the first Prize criterion as a helpful framework for understanding the many factors that affect community health. However, selection criteria for the Prize are completely independent of use of the model and of health outcomes and health factor rankings. Communities will be judged on their accomplishments and how well they meet the six Prize criteria – not where they fall in the County Health Rankings.

What is the connection between the Prize and Robert Wood Johnson Foundation’s grantmaking program?

The Prize is open to all communities, including those that have and have not previously received grants from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. Communities will be judged, using the six Prize criteria, on what they have accomplished relative to available resources, regardless of the funding source.

How will applications be evaluated?

The six Prize criteria (see 2020 Call for Applications pp. 6-7) will drive the judging throughout the selection process, from Phase I through the site visits. Judges are particularly interested in the extent to which accomplishments reflect the first three criteria, which are considered foundational to building a Culture of Health. Judges will not only review each criterion individually, but will also consider how the community creates momentum towards positive, inclusive, equitable and lasting change with an eye towards how the community has demonstrated creativity and determination in addressing a wide range of community improvement priorities.

Are past applicant communities evaluated differently?

All applicants are evaluated according to the six Prize criteria and based on their current application materials. Past Phase I and Phase II applicants are not assessed differently from all other applicants. Past finalist communities that reapply when eligible will receive additional guidance, should they advance to Phase II of the competition.

How will winners be selected?

Communities will advance from Phase I to Phase II based on how well their four accomplishments illustrate the six Prize criteria with a particular emphasis on the first three criteria: (1) defining health in the broadest possible terms, (2) committing to sustainable systems changes and policy-oriented long-term solutions, and (3) creating conditions that give everyone a fair and just opportunity to reach their best possible health. Advancing from Phase II to finalist status will also be based on a review of the application materials (written materials and community video) according to how well the community as a whole has embraced all six Prize criteria. Winners will be selected based on a combination of Phase I and II materials and the face-to-face site visit. During the site visit, communities may also feature accomplishments and information beyond what was included in the written application that supports how they are improving health, opportunity, and equity in their community in line with the Prize criteria.

What is the process for selecting the winners?

Phase I and Phase II applications will be evaluated by a panel of judges that include staff from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute, and the Prize National Advisory Group, which is comprised of experts in building healthy communities from a variety of organizations across the nation. This process will determine the communities selected for a site visit. Site visitors also include staff from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute, and the Prize National Advisory Group. Site visitors will score each community visited based on the six Prize criteria. The final slate of winning communities will be approved by RWJF.

Who are the national experts that are involved in the Prize selection process?

The 2019 Prize National Advisory Group members include:

- John Auerbach, MBA, *president / CEO*, Trust for America's Health
- Bettina Byrd-Giles, MA.Ed, *CEO*, The Bethesda Life Center, Inc.
- Colby Dailey, MA, *managing director*, Build Healthy Places Network
- Kristin Giantris, MPA, *managing director – consulting*, Nonprofit Finance Fund
- Ben Hecht, JD, *president / CEO*, Living Cities
- Justin Kii Huenemann, *president / CEO*, Notah Begay III Foundation
- Necole S. Irvin, JD, MPH, *principal*, Blackwood Advisors; Prize National Advisory Group Chair
- Letetia Daniels Jackson, BBA, *president / CEO*, Tandeka, LLC
- Janhavi Kirtane, *general manager / staff vice president*, CareMore Health System
- Paul Lindberg, *collective impact health specialist*, Partnership of United Way of the Columbia Gorge and Providence Hood River Hospital
- Marcus Littles, MPA, *senior partner*, Frontline Solutions
- Vilma Martínez-Domínguez, BS, *community development director*, City of Lawrence, Mayor's Liaison to the Mayor's Health Task Force
- Khanh Nguyen, JD, *senior program officer*, The Colorado Health Foundation
- Kalpana Ramiah, DrPH, MSc, *director of research*, America's Essential Hospitals
- Joe Reardon, JD, *president / CEO*, Greater Kansas City Chamber of Commerce

National experts (and their affiliation at the time) involved in the past include:

- David G. Altman, PhD, *executive vice president, research, innovation, and product development*, Center for Creative Leadership
- Catherine M. Baase, MD, *global director, health services*, The Dow Chemical Company
- Georges C. Benjamin, MD, FACP, FACEP(E), *executive director*, American Public Health Association
- David Chase, BA, *vice president of national outreach*, Small Business Majority
- Antony Chiang, JD, *president*, Empire Health Foundation
- Kitty Hsu Dana, MBA, *vice president, community impact, health*, United Way Worldwide
- Crystal Echo Hawk, MA, *president / CEO*, Echo Hawk Consulting
- Ginny Ehrlich, MPH, D Ed, *former CEO, Clinton Health Matters initiative*, Clinton Foundation
- Lori Freeman, MBA, *chief executive officer*, Association of Maternal Child Health Programs
- Maeghan Gilmore, MPH, *program director – county solutions & innovation*, National Association of Counties
- Lavastian Glenn, BA, *program officer*, Mary Reynolds Babcock Foundation
- Phillip González, MA, *program director*, Community Catalyst
- Patricia Nez Henderson, MD, *program director*, Black Hills Center for American Indian Health
- Chris Kabel, MPH, *senior program officer*, The Kresge Foundation
- Mary Kramer, MA, *former Iowa State senator and former U.S. ambassador to Barbados*
- Sanne Magnan, MD, PhD, *president / CEO*, Institute for Clinical Systems Improvement
- Judith Monroe, MD, *director*, Office for State, Tribal, Local, and Territorial Support, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
- Marcie Parkhurst, MCP, *associate director*, FSG
- Susan Patterson, BA, *program director*, Charlotte, NC, Knight Foundation
- Mary Pittman, DrPH, *president / CEO*, Public Health Institute
- Yanique Redwood, PhD, MPH, *president / CEO*, Consumer Health Foundation
- Lillian Rivera, RN, MSN, PhD, *administrator*, Florida Department of Health in Miami-Dade County
- Eduardo Sánchez, MD, MPH, FAAFP, *chief medical officer – prevention, chief – center for health metrics and evaluation*, American Heart Association
- Tim Size, MBA, *executive director*, Rural Wisconsin Health Cooperative
- Allen J. Smart, MPH, MA, *project director – rural philanthropy*, Campbell University
- Brian Smedley, PhD, *vice president and director*, Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies
- Marion Standish, JD, *director of community health*, The California Endowment
- David Stone, PhD, *associate professor of public health*, Northern Illinois University
- Sarah Strunk, MHA, *executive director*, Active Living by Design
- Kathy Sykes, MA, *senior advisor, aging initiative*, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
- Julie Trocchio, RN, BSN, MS, *senior director, community benefit and continuing care*, Catholic Health Association
- Elizabeth M. Walker Romero, MS, *senior director*, Association of State and Territorial Health Officials
- Tracy Wiedt, MPH, *strategic director for healthy communities*, American Cancer Society
- David R. Williams, PhD, MPH, *Florence and Laura Norman professor of public health*, Harvard School of Public Health
- Valarie Wilson, MPA, *executive director*, The Atlanta Beltline Partnership

May we submit letters of support on behalf of our application?

No supplementary materials, including letters of support, will be accepted, but we strongly encourage you to highlight your partners and supporters in your application materials. There will be additional opportunities to directly feature your partners and supporters in your community video and/or site visit should you advance in the Prize selection process.

If my community wins, who gets the money?

During Phase II, each applicant community will be required to designate a local U.S. governmental entity or tax exempt public charity operating in its community to accept the \$25,000 Prize on the community's behalf, should they win. To be eligible, the recommended Prize recipient must be a local U.S. governmental entity, including, but not limited to, state universities, or a tax exempt entity under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code (the "Code") and classified as other than a private foundation or Type III supporting organization under section 509 of the Code. RWJF will review the proposed recipients to make sure the organization meets this criteria and, in certain instances, it may be necessary to designate a different recipient. Community partners can decide together how to use the funds to benefit the community; budget reports to RWJF or UWPHI on Prize expenditures are not required.

Can any eligible community win?

The Prize will be awarded to eligible communities that are each on their own unique journey toward improved health, opportunity, and equity. Every community can participate in the process of becoming healthier. Judges will evaluate each applicant individually, considering demonstrated progress relative to the six Prize criteria in light of each community's unique challenges, opportunities and resources.

However, as a steward of private resources that must be used in the public's interest, RWJF reserves the right to disqualify a community or its designated Prize recipient should RWJF learn of circumstances involving that community or designated Prize recipient that conflict, in fact or in spirit, with RWJF's goals or values.

What is expected of communities that win the RWJF Culture of Health Prize?

Based on their demonstrated capacity for and dedication to creating lasting change, representatives from winning communities will be expected to serve as ambassadors for building a Culture of Health across America – sharing their successes, learning from others, and networking locally, regionally, and nationally. This may be accomplished via invitations to interview with print, radio, electronic or television media; present at regional, state or national conferences or webinars; serve on national advisory groups; or participate in other avenues yet to be determined. Prize winning communities are also invited to engage in ongoing learning and networking opportunities through the Prize Alumni Network. Winners will work closely with RWJF communications and UWPHI to prepare for these opportunities.

My community may not be quite ready to submit this year. How much do the criteria and selection process change from year to year? Could we use the criteria as guideposts for our readiness?

The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation has an enduring commitment to the RWJF Culture of Health Prize. The Prize criteria are at the core of the program and are not expected to change substantially going forward. With this in mind, communities are encouraged to use the criteria as a general resource for community improvement action as well as a tool for gauging readiness for applying for the Prize.

We are interested in improving our application. Is there a way to find out why our community did not win last year?

Due to the large volume of applications received, the program is unable to provide feedback to all communities about their past applications. Applicants that advance to Phase II and are not selected as finalists receive individualized written feedback about how their application did or did not reflect the six Prize criteria. Applicants that advance to the Site Visit Phase but do not win a Prize can receive individualized feedback at their request. Communities may also conduct a self-assessment of their application using the six Prize criteria found in the Call for Applications. Additional tools that can assist your community with advancing your work to improve health and well-being include the [Roadmaps to Health Action Center](#) and [What Works for Health](#).

Will there be a Call for Applications for the RWJF Culture of Health Prize released for 2021?

The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation plans to issue a Call for Applications for the 2021 Prize competition in 2020.

Whom may I contact for more information?

For more information on the RWJF Culture of Health Prize, please contact: Carrie Carroll, Deputy Director, RWJF Culture of Health Prize, email: info@cohprize.wisc.edu.

Phase I FAQs

Do we need accomplishments in all four factor areas of the County Health Rankings model in order to apply?

There is not a specific requirement for one accomplishment per health factor; however, applicants are encouraged to elevate accomplishments that best exemplify the Prize criteria and as such are strongly encouraged to consider how work across their community reflects a balanced portfolio across the multiple determinants of health, for example as reflected in the [County Health Rankings](#) model. While policies, programs, and strategies that support healthy eating, physical activity, and other health behaviors are important, they are only one piece of the puzzle. Standing alone, these will not result in a competitive application. Because of their strong influence on health outcomes, judges have particular interest in accomplishments targeting action to improve the social and economic factors (i.e., education, employment, income, family & social support, community safety). Applicants that advance to Phase II of the competition will be asked to provide additional information about how they are working across the multiple determinants of health.

What are historically excluded populations as referenced in the Call for Applications?

Residents who have been historically excluded from opportunities refers to those “who have often suffered discrimination or been excluded or marginalized from society and the health-promoting resources it has to offer. . . Examples of historically excluded/marginalized or disadvantaged groups include—but are not limited to—people of color; people living in poverty, particularly across generations; religious minorities; people with physical or mental disabilities; LGBTQ persons; and women.” (Definition from: [What Is Health Equity? And What Difference Does a Definition Make?](#), Braveman et al., 2017, p. 4.)

What are policy and systems changes as referenced in the Prize criteria?

In general, these types of changes represent a shift from thinking about improving individual health to thinking about how to improve health, opportunity, and equity at a population level by making healthy choices the easy choices and by creating conditions that provide opportunities for all community residents to be their healthiest. Policy change includes the passing of laws, ordinances, resolutions, mandates, regulations, or rules; system change involves change made to the rules or processes within an organization or the rules or processes that guide how different organizations and groups work together. Policy change can also enable successful programs to be replicated and/or funded. These changes may target many different kinds and sizes of populations. For example, policy changes in education could affect students and their families in one school, a whole school district, a county, or a state. Successful applicants tend to feature a strategic mix of policy, programmatic, and systems changes that are designed to last.

What if our community hasn't yet undertaken work in the area of policy and systems change?

This work is difficult – but it's crucial for improving population health. Communities that have not yet done this type of work may not yet be competitive for the Prize, but we encourage you to explore the wide variety of resources available to communities in this area, including the [Roadmaps to Health Action Center](#) and [What Works for Health](#).

We are having a hard time deciding on just four accomplishments to feature. What do you suggest?

There is no one best way to determine which accomplishments to feature in your application, but we encourage community members to collaborate on these decisions and keep the six Prize criteria top of mind during your deliberations. An accomplishment may be an individual policy, program, or strategy, or an integrated or closely-related collection of policies, programs, or strategies. Taken together, your four accomplishments should reflect work that goes beyond any single intervention and showcases progress toward better health, opportunity, and equity. Applicants should describe how each accomplishment relates to identified community challenges and how it may impact historically excluded populations or geographic areas in the community. Communities that move to Phase II will have the opportunity to showcase additional information about their accomplishments and how they are meeting all six Prize criteria.

What type of data should a community be ready to submit with their application?

In your Phase I application essay, we encourage communities to include qualitative and quantitative process measures, outcome data, and stories of success that you are most proud of and that best demonstrate how your community's efforts align with the Prize criteria. We are not seeking reports or studies in the Phase I application. As an applicant community is invited to advance in the Prize competition from Phase I to Phase II and the site visit, there are increasing opportunities to share outcome data with the judges.

Should the application include references, citations, charts, photos or hyperlinks to additional information?

Information that you want to convey to reviewers should be directly included in the content of the five-page essay. References, citations, charts, photos, or hyperlinks to additional information are not required for this submission and are not encouraged.

Our community uses a multi-sector collective impact initiative approach. How should we represent this in our Prize application?

One or more of your collective impact accomplishments could be featured in the four accomplishments required in the Phase I application for the Prize. The five key elements of [collective impact](#) are also woven into the six Prize criteria, so use your successes in collective impact to tell us how you have done your work. For example, shared measurement systems in collective impact can be an integral part of Prize Criterion #6—Measuring and sharing progress and results.

Communities benefit from many different types of partnerships and collaborations, including those with organizations located outside their geopolitical boundaries. May we consider such partnerships for our Phase I essay?

Yes. Community applicants are encouraged to illustrate the depth and breadth of collaborations and partnerships within and beyond their communities. Please keep in mind, however, that judges seek to honor communities that are driving the process from within. Communities should be able to demonstrate an internal force and passion for community health improvement that is independent of external contributions.

What is the ideal number of partners to involve in a successful application?

There is no ideal number or minimum number of partners to include. Rather, the application should address how partners across sectors are collaborating and working together toward a shared goal of improving health, opportunity, and equity across the community, and how this work represents the six Prize criteria. References to partnership and collaboration in the Prize criteria are broadly defined and may include both formal and informal relationships between community members, organizations, and sectors.

Do judges give preference to applications that emphasize well-established policies, programs, or strategies?

Applicant communities are encouraged to demonstrate a balanced approach to community improvement that may feature well-established accomplishments as well as newly implemented efforts, selecting four that collectively best exemplify the six Prize criteria. **Please note, however, that planning and convening processes such as coalition development, community health assessments, or improvement plans do not qualify as “accomplishments” for this submission.** This type of foundational work can be featured in the introduction of your Phase I essay.

Are Prize criteria ranked in order of importance?

The six Prize criteria together drive the RWJF Culture of Health Prize competition from beginning to end; all play a vital role in selection of winners. That said, special consideration is given to the first three criteria throughout all stages of the review process: (1) defining health in the broadest possible terms; (2) committing to sustainable systems changes and policy-oriented long-term solutions; and (3) creating conditions that give everyone a fair and just opportunity to reach their best possible health.

How are applicants notified if they are advancing to Phase II?

The two contact people listed in the application will be notified by email. Those advancing to Phase II will receive an invitation with detailed instructions about requirements and deadlines for the next stage of the process.

Phase II FAQs

What will be required as part of the Phase II Application?

For Phase II, invited community applicants will:

- Submit a second essay to provide judges with additional information about community health improvement efforts, with a focus on *what* they have done and *how* they have done it, including how the community is working across all six Prize criteria.
- Prepare a brief four-minute video that brings the community’s story to life through the voices of its residents.
- Draft a site visit itinerary to give judges a sense of what they might see and who they might meet should the community be selected as a finalist.
- Designate a local governmental entity or tax exempt public charity within the community to accept the \$25,000 Prize on the community’s behalf, should their community win.

Should the Phase II essay include a statement of how we intend to use the Prize money should we win?

No. The RWJF Culture of Health Prize offers a cash prize of \$25,000 to each winning community. There is no need or expectation for applicant communities to state their intentions about how the cash prize will be used anywhere in application materials.

Is a community video required of applicants?

Yes, but only for those communities that are selected to advance to Phase II of the competition. The community video is intended to supplement the written application materials by allowing judges to hear about the community's improvement journey from the voices and perspectives of community residents who are most directly impacted by local challenges. Judges' assessments of your video will be based on thoughtfulness of content rather than production quality.

Could you recommend a quick, easy, and inexpensive way to create a community video?

For production, communities may wish to consider using [Animoto.com](https://www.animoto.com/), [Windows Movie Maker](https://www.windows.com/en-us/moviemaker/), [iMovie](https://www.apple.com/iphonemovie/), or other user-friendly sites that offer services for free or nominal costs. You may also want to tap into the creative expertise that already exists in your community. For example, former applicants have enlisted the help of their local media, high school video clubs, local businesses, and/or youth organizations. You may have other assets to tap in your community. Because judges' assessments of your video will be based on content rather than production quality, there is no need to have professional narration or to have the video professionally edited. We strongly urge communities to rely on economical, user-friendly, online video-production platforms (such as those listed above) in lieu of more costly options.

How long should the community video be?

The community video may be up to 4 minutes (240 seconds) in length.

The videos featuring the winning communities on the RWJF website are very well done. Are these videos submitted by communities as part of their applications or are they produced for the announcement of winners?

The [featured videos](#) are produced by RWJF following winner selection; these videos were NOT submitted by applicant communities. For the Phase II video submission, communities are encouraged to make use of user-friendly and low-cost options such as those described in the previous question.

Should the community video focus on the four accomplishments from the Phase I application or should we think more broadly?

Judges will be looking to the community video as an opportunity to hear about the community's improvement journey from the voices and perspectives of community residents who are most directly impacted by local challenges. Therefore, in creating the video, communities are encouraged to think broadly and use the video submission as a means to showcase community voices and engagement, rather than to reiterate Phase I or Phase II essay content.

Are past Prize winners available to provide advice or guidance to future applicants?

As ambassadors for the Prize, RWJF Culture of Health Prize winners share a desire to inspire community improvement efforts throughout the nation, a role which includes but is not limited to discussing their work at local, regional, state, and national forums. Communities are encouraged to learn about the winners through the videos and content in the [Prize Gallery](#), rather than contacting winners directly.

May the primary or alternate contact organizations serve as the Prize recipient and receive the \$25,000 award should the community win?

Yes. The primary or alternate contact organizations may also serve as the Prize recipient so long as the organization satisfies the necessary requirements (i.e., a local U.S. governmental entity, including, but not limited to, state universities, or a tax exempt entity under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code (the "Code") and classified as other than a private foundation or Type III supporting organization under section 509 of the Code).

Finalist & Site Visit FAQs

When will the site visits take place?

Site visits for the 2020 Prize competition will take place in April and May of 2020.

How will site visits be scheduled?

If your community is selected as a finalist, you will be contacted by RWJF Culture of Health Prize staff at UWPHI, who will ask you to complete a questionnaire (generally within three to five business days of notification) to determine which of the possible site visit dates will work for your community.

How long will site visits last?

Site visitors will be in your community for about 24 hours. The visit itself will take place over two days, typically beginning in the early afternoon of the first day and ending around noon on the second.

How many site visitors will participate?

Each RWJF Culture of Health Prize site visit team will typically have five members. Site visitors will represent the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute, and members of the Prize National Advisory Group, which is comprised of experts in building healthy communities from a variety of organizations across the nation.

What happens during a site visit?

The site visit is an opportunity for finalist communities to showcase their accomplishments and bring life and voice to the Phase I and II submissions. Site visits typically include the following three elements:

Community Tour

The Community Tour (3 ½ hours) is an opportunity for community members to provide site visitors with a first-hand introduction to the people, places, policies, systems and environmental changes that make the community unique and that have played a prominent role in the community's health improvement story.

Round-table Conversation

The round-table conversation (2 hours) is an opportunity to introduce site visitors to six formal and informal community leaders to discuss the history of health improvement in the community, visions for the future, driving forces behind community efforts, challenges faced, and how all the pieces fit together.

Community Conversation

The community conversation (3 hours) convenes a broader group of approximately 20 community participants to discuss diverse perspectives about the community's journey toward better health and to share stories, reflections, and insights that speak to how the six Prize criteria are reflected in collective efforts.

More specific guidance and resources will be available for those invited to participate in the site visit phase of the competition.

Who organizes the site visit?

The community will be asked to decide on primary and alternate points of contact for communications with RWJF Culture of Health Prize staff at UWPHI during the site visit phase. An initial request will be extended to the Primary Contact listed on the community's application. These individuals will provide leadership for organizing the three elements of the site visit (Community Tour, Leadership Conversation, and Community Conversation) and will coordinate all logistics with the Prize staff.

Who pays for the site visit?

To acknowledge the time and effort it takes to host a site visit, the Prize program offers finalist communities a total site visit payment of \$4,000. A minor portion of this payment is intended to cover any food, venue, or transportation costs associated with the site visit, which the community will arrange. All travel expenses for the RWJF Culture of Health Prize site visit team will be covered by the Prize program.

May finalist communities offer gifts to site visitors?

To be fair across all finalist communities, there is no need to provide gifts or promotional materials for site visitors. Site visitors find it helpful, though, to receive brief written materials that have been developed for purposes other than the site visit to highlight and build upon what they see and hear during the visit.

How will we be notified if we have won the Prize?

The site visit contacts designated by your community will be notified by phone and/or email as to whether they have won the Prize. Additional information on the timing of this notification will be provided during the site visit.

What happens if we win?

Lots! RWJF and UWPHI will work collaboratively with you to help prepare for a national event and media outreach around the announcement of the Prize winners. Here are a few of the initial activities you can anticipate:

- Your community will be assigned a communications liaison from the RWJF communications team. This person's responsibility is to coordinate all communications and media activities for your community.
- A video crew, a writer, and a photographer will come to your community and work with you to help tell your story.
- You will work with the communications liaison to prepare media releases and outreach to media, policymakers and other audiences.
- You will identify which members of your community will attend the national RWJF Culture of Health Prize Celebration & Learning Event, and RWJF will fund travel for several members of your community to attend the event.
- During the Celebration & Learning Event, community members in attendance will play a variety of roles, including accepting the Prize on the community's behalf, sharing your successes, and, in some cases, speaking to media representatives. This event will provide excellent opportunities for learning and networking through engagement with current and past Prize-winning communities, RWJF and UWPHI leadership and staff, and other invited guests.

When may we share the good news with our community?

You may share the news with your community after the national unveiling of winners. This means that your good news will be a secret (or embargoed) for a period of time. Under the terms of the embargo, you may share the news with key people involved in your community health improvement efforts, but not to the general public or the local media. Between learning of your good news and the national unveiling of winners, time will be used for preparing winning communities' videos and other communications, so these materials are ready for sharing at the time winners are officially announced.

Is there support to help winners celebrate with the local community?

We encourage winners to capitalize on the momentum of the national announcement by planning a local opportunity to "bring the Prize home" and engage partners and community members in celebrating accomplishments. The Prize program will provide a stipend to support a celebration opportunity. Local celebration opportunities can happen any time *after* the national announcement of Prize winners and within one year of the announcement. At your invitation and depending on availability, a representative from RWJF, UWPHI, and/or the Prize National Advisory Group may be able to participate in your local opportunity to celebrate the Prize win.

What happens after the celebrations?

To raise awareness and inspire locally-driven change across the country, winning communities' success stories will also be shared broadly in a variety of ways including a combination of:

- Video storytelling;
- Social, broadcast and print media;
- Web and online platform postings;

- Meeting and conference presentations; and
- Visits with policymakers.

Winning community leaders will become part of the 500+ person strong Prize Alumni Network and may receive invitations to future Prize events, to learning and sharing opportunities to support their ongoing community improvement efforts, and to occasions to serve as ambassadors for building a national Culture of Health.