



Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

Jobs to Careers

Promoting Work-Based Learning
for Quality Care



**2007 Call for Proposals—
Implementation Grants**

Brief Proposal Deadline

June 12, 2007

Program Overview

(Please refer to specific sections for complete 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 (currently employed) workers providing care and services on the front lines of our 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.

The *implementation grants* will fund partnerships of health and health care employers and educational institutions to promote learning, career advancement and testing of new models of work-based learning.

Eligibility Criteria (page 10)

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 include employers, educational institutions or other organizations within the partnership that are public entities or nonprofit organizations that are tax-exempt under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Only one organization representing the partnership may submit a proposal.

Selection Criteria (page 11)

A complete list of selection criteria can be found on page 11.

Total Awards

- Up to eight grants will be awarded.
- Applicants may apply for grants of up to \$437,750 over three years. *Note that this is a competitive initiative, as only nine partnerships were awarded grants out of a total of 188 applications in the previous solicitation.*

Key Dates and Deadlines

May 16, 2007—Optional Web conference for interested applicants.

June 12, 2007 (3 p.m. ET)—Deadline for receipt of brief proposals.

July 19, 2007—Applicants notified about invitation to submit a full proposal.

August 30, 2007 (3 p.m. ET)—Deadline for receipt of full proposals.

January 15, 2008—Start of grants.

How to Apply (page 13)

All proposals must be submitted only through the RWJF Grantmaking Online system. For additional information, including answers to frequently asked questions (FAQs), please contact:

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Phone: (617) 728-4446

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www.jobs2careers.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 the 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 clinics, 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 Bachelor's level education or less, and lack credentials that allow independent practice. (For further description of frontline workforce occupations, see two publications on the RWJF Web site, "Defining the Frontline Workforce," at <http://www.rwjf.org/files/publications/DefiningFrontlineWorkforce.pdf> and "Workers Who Care: A Graphical Profile of the Frontline Health and Health Care Workforce" at http://www.rwjf.org/files/publications/other/workers_who_care.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 offer career development 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 Change

A primary goal of Jobs to Careers is to promote innovations and the redesign of management, educational or operational systems that offer clear paths for employees to follow to improve their skills. A Jobs to Careers project 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. They should also result in more visible and accessible routes to learning and advancement. 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.

2. Partnerships

To drive this systemic change, Jobs to Careers expects that partnerships will involve 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

Another central goal of Jobs to Careers is to test work-based learning methodologies as a complement to other skill and learning strategies. Work-based learning is an approach to adult education and training that uses the worker’s job setting and current or future responsibilities to achieve learning objectives. Work-based learning methods establish a clear set of structured expectations, measure achievement of specific competencies, and reward mastery with academic credit and/or wage improvements or bonuses.

Work-based learning requires new partnerships between employers and educational institutions to develop methods that go beyond traditional notions of contextualized learning. Work-based learning is not on-site classroom training, nor is it distance learning or confined to semesters or other units of the academic calendar. It is continuous with, and part of, the activities and responsibilities of the work day. In work-based learning, the learner is an employee, accountable for performance in learning activities. The curriculum is driven not by academic standards alone, but by the needs and goals of the workplace. Ultimately, the learning activity is not a one-time add-on to the work organization, but part of the culture of a learning organization. Please visit www.jobs2careers.org for examples and potential approaches to work-based learning.

The Program

Jobs to Careers: Promoting Work-Based Learning for Quality Care is a four-year, \$15.8-million national program of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, in collaboration with the Hitachi Foundation and the United States Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration. 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 program has two primary goals:

- To develop, expand and institutionalize systems to create lasting improvements in the way that institutions train and advance all of their frontline workers.
- To develop and test new models of work-based learning.

In addition, Jobs to Careers expects to offer a limited number of research grants under a separate solicitation. A research call for proposals will be available later this month.

Jobs to Careers will award up to eight implementation grants of up to \$437,750 over three years. *Note that this is a very competitive initiative, as only nine partnerships were awarded grants out of a total of 188 applications in the previous solicitation.*

Grant Requirements and Expected Outcomes

Proposals should demonstrate a commitment to and rationale for a systems change strategy that will provide structured and supportive strategies for skills and career development for all frontline workers. Proposed projects must include:

- 1) System improvements within and among all partnering organizations to support learning and career advancement of frontline workers.

System changes must increase the visibility and accessibility of opportunities for advancement for all frontline workers.

2) Models of work-based learning and other learning vehicles that will be used to meet the identified needs of targeted workers. Projects may include a variety of education and training methods and modalities, but must incorporate work-based learning.

3) Partnerships between employer and educational institutions.

4) A targeted cohort of frontline workers that will be the initial focus of the project, as a way to pilot system changes and work-based learning methods. Proposals must describe how the proposed system changes and work-based learning methods developed for the first cohort will be expanded and institutionalized for all frontline workers.

5) Rewards for workers who successfully participate, including wage increases/bonuses if appropriate. Training strategies developed through Jobs to Careers must result in academic credit or industry-recognized credentials.

Proposed projects must also:

- Target low-wage, incumbent 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; and
- Identify and effectively use multiple sources of funding (including external sources) to support a portion of the costs of training and education during the funded project and to sustain these activities beyond the grant period.

Expected outcomes of successful projects include:

- Redesigned systems and adopted policies within all partner organizations that support and institutionalize skill and career development opportunities for all frontline workers, and increase the visibility and accessibility of these opportunities;
- Work-based learning models that improve systems of training workers and lead to worker rewards and advancement; and
- Measurable increases in the skill, knowledge and advancement opportunities for a cohort of frontline workers targeted for training during the grant period.

Evaluation and Monitoring

An evaluation of Jobs to Careers is being conducted by evaluators from the University of North Carolina, Institute on Aging. 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, conference calls and give progress reports on their grants.

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 (NPO), to share challenges, successes and lessons learned. This collaborative also includes the nine grantee sites chosen in the first round of solicitations. Participation includes two required peer learning meetings each year, periodic Web-based discussion groups and teleconferences. In addition, each grantee will receive individualized technical assistance from the NPO, 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 clinics) 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 clinics, 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

Brief proposals will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- Understanding of the workforce development needs and barriers of incumbent frontline workers.
- Understanding of and commitment to making systems changes that will create greater advancement opportunities and rewards for frontline workers.
- Commitment to incorporate work-based learning methods.
- Innovative approach to solving compelling business and workforce challenges.

Full proposals will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- A feasible project design that flows logically from business and organizational challenges and the related skill development needs of the targeted employees.
- Effectiveness and sustainability of the proposed system changes to increase visibility and accessibility of career development for all frontline health and health care workers in job categories least likely to have educational and advancement opportunities.
- Commitment to develop innovative training strategies that incorporate work-based learning.
- Commitment to develop systems for rewarding frontline workers for participation, including financial rewards, career advancement and academic credit or industry-recognized credentials.
- Ability of the applicant organization to implement the proposed project and system change activities, including investment of sufficient time for project management and staff expertise in managing a large-scale project.
- Involvement of frontline workers and supervisors in planning and decision-making.
- Ability and commitment to sustain the initiative beyond the funded project.

- 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 that additional resources can be secured to help support and sustain the cost of education and training.

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 that represent a variety of frontline workers 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 work-based learning and other 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. Budgets should also reflect the cash or in-kind matching contribution the partners will contribute 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 three steps: (1) The submission of a brief proposal; (2) if selected as a semi-finalist, the submission of a full proposal, line-item budget, budget narrative, workplan and Collaborating Entities Agreement describing all partners, their roles and the resources each organization is committing to the project; and (3) participation in a site visit, if selected as a finalist.

Stage 1: Brief Proposals

Applicants must submit a brief proposal that describes the project and include a one-page preliminary budget.

Stage 2: Full Proposals

Selected Stage 1 applicants will be invited by letter or e-mail to submit a full proposal accompanied by a budget and budget narrative.

All proposals for this program must be submitted through the RWJF Grantmaking Online system at <http://grantmaking.rwjf.org/dfw2>.

Brief proposals must be received no later than 3 p.m. ET on June 12, 2007 and full proposals are due no later than 3 p.m. ET on August 30, 2007. Proposals that are mailed, faxed or late will not be considered.

Answers to frequently asked questions (FAQs) and other relevant information are available on the Jobs to Careers Web site at www.jobs2careers.org. Please direct all other inquiries about the program, selection criteria or proposal requirements to:

Rebecca Starr, M.B.A., M.S.W., *deputy director*
Jobs to Careers
Phone: (617) 728-4446
E-mail: rstarr@jobs2careers.org

This program has a national advisory committee that makes funding recommendations to Foundation staff. All grant decisions are made by RWJF. RWJF 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 located at:

Jobs for the Future
88 Broad Street
Boston, MA 02210
Phone: (617) 728-4446
Fax: (617) 728-4857
E-mail: rstarr@jobs2careers.org
Web site: www.jobs2careers.org

Responsible staff members at the NPO are:

- Marlene Seltzer, *president*, Jobs for the Future
- Rebecca Starr, M.B.A., M.S.W., *deputy director*

Responsible staff members at the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation are:

- Sallie Petrucci George, M.P.H., *program officer*
- John Lumpkin, M.D., M.P.H., *senior vice president and director, Health Care Group*
- Najaf Ahmad, M.P.H., *communications associate*
- Christine Phares, *grants administrator*

Timetable

- **May 16, 2007**

Optional Web conference for interested applicants.
Please register online at www.jobs2careers.org.

- **June 12, 2007 (3 p.m. ET)**

Deadline for receipt of brief proposals.

- **July 19, 2007**

Applicants notified about invitation to submit a full proposal.

- **August 30, 2007 (3 p.m. ET)**

Deadline for receipt of full proposals.

- **October 4, 2007**

Finalists are notified they have been selected for site visits.

- **October 10–31, 2007**

Site visits with finalists.

- **January 15, 2008**

Start of grants.

Jobs to Careers is a national program of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, in collaboration with the Hitachi Foundation and the United States Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration.

About the Hitachi Foundation

The Hitachi Foundation 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.

About the Employment and Training Administration, United States Department of Labor

The Employment and Training Administration administers federal government job training and worker dislocation programs, federal grants to states for public employment service programs, and unemployment insurance benefits. These services are primarily provided through state and local workforce development systems.

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, we work with a diverse group of organizations and individuals to identify solutions and achieve comprehensive, meaningful and timely change.

For 35 years we've brought experience, commitment and a rigorous, balanced approach to the problems that affect the health and health care of those we serve. When it comes to helping Americans lead healthier lives and get the care they need, we expect to make a difference in your lifetime.

For more information visit www.rwjf.org.

Sign up to receive e-mail alerts on upcoming calls for proposals at
www.rwjf.org/services.



**Robert Wood Johnson
Foundation**

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