



Robert Wood Johnson  
Foundation

# Healthy Eating Research

## Building Evidence to Prevent Childhood Obesity

*Grants for  
Junior Investigators  
Exploring Food  
Environments and  
Policies in Targeted  
Topic Areas*

### **2007 Call for Proposals—Special Solicitation Round 2**

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#### **Brief Proposal Deadline**

February 6, 2008

## Program Overview

(Please refer to specific sections for complete detail.)

### Purpose

*Healthy Eating Research* is a national program of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. The program supports research on environmental and policy strategies to promote healthy eating among children to prevent childhood obesity, especially among low-income and racial/ethnic populations at highest risk for obesity. Findings are expected to advance RWJF's efforts to reverse the childhood obesity epidemic by 2015.

This special solicitation is a funding opportunity from RWJF for *New Connections* grants through the Healthy Eating Research program. New Connections grants are for *junior investigators* from historically disadvantaged and underrepresented communities who have completed their doctorate or terminal degree within the last seven years. **This round of funding focuses on studies of policy and environmental strategies in four areas: food pricing and economic approaches; food and beverage marketing and promotion; improving access to affordable healthy foods in low-income communities; and evaluations of other promising food-related policy and environmental strategies.**

### Total Awards

A total of up to three grants will be awarded. There are two categories of funding focused on the four areas listed above:

- **Small-scale studies** to identify environmental determinants or evaluate changes to the food environment or policies in the four targeted areas. (12- to 24-month awards of up to \$100,000)
- **Macro-level analyses** of food and beverage policies and environmental approaches related to the four targeted areas. (12- to 24-month awards of up to \$75,000)

### Eligibility Criteria (page 14)

Investigators must:

- have completed a doctorate or terminal degree (e.g., Ph.D., M.D., J.D.) within the past seven years. Doctorate or terminal degrees must have been obtained after September 1, 2001;
- be a citizen or permanent resident of the United States or its territories;
- be affiliated with or sponsored by a university or an organization that is tax-exempt under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code and is not a private Foundation under Section 509(a) of the Code. The sponsoring institution must agree to receive and administer the grant;
- be from a group that has been historically disadvantaged and underrepresented in research including people from ethnic or racial minorities, first-generation college graduates and people from low-income communities;
- hold a position as a faculty member or other research position in a university setting, or hold an equivalent position in a non-university setting, such as an independent research organization;
- demonstrate evidence of research skills relevant to the proposed study;
- propose a project that spans 12 to 24 months in duration; and
- devote at least 25 percent of their time to the project.

### Selection Criteria (page 15)

Complete selection criteria can be found on page 15.

### Key Dates and Deadlines

**February 6, 2008 (3 p.m. ET)**—Deadline for receipt of brief proposals.

**April 9, 2008**—Select applicants will be invited to submit full proposals.

**May 22, 2008 (3 p.m. ET)**—Deadline for receipt of full proposals.

### How to Apply (page 18)

All proposals must be submitted only through the RWJF Grantmaking Online system at <http://grantmaking.rwjf.org/hemc2>. Please direct inquiries to:

Laura L. Klein, M.P.H., *research coordinator*

Healthy Eating Research

Phone: (800) 578-8636

E-mail: [healthyeating@umn.edu](mailto:healthyeating@umn.edu)

[www.healthyeatingresearch.org](http://www.healthyeatingresearch.org).

## Background

Childhood obesity poses a serious threat to the health of our nation. Over the past four decades, obesity rates in the United States have more than quadrupled among children ages 6 to 11, more than tripled among adolescents ages 12 to 19 and nearly tripled among children ages 2 to 5. Today, more than 33 percent of U.S. children and adolescents—nearly 25 million children and teens—are either overweight or obese.

Cumulative changes in children's food environments over the past few decades have increased the availability, appeal, affordability and consumption of foods and beverages that are low in nutrients, but high in fat and calories. Few children eat the amount of fruits and vegetables recommended in the federal government's Dietary Guidelines for Americans, and many consume excess fat and calories. At the same time, kids are spending more time using electronic media, including television, DVDs, video games and the Internet, and less time being physically active. Today, less than 4 percent of elementary schools offer daily physical education. This makes it even more important to improve children's access and exposure to healthy foods in order to achieve the energy balance required for a healthy body weight.

The Institute of Medicine's reports on *Preventing Childhood Obesity: Health in the Balance* and *Progress in Preventing Childhood Obesity: How Do We Measure Up?* recommend research to identify effective environmental and policy approaches at varied levels (i.e., national, state, community, institutional) and in specific settings (e.g., neighborhood, school) with strong potential to improve children's healthy eating, energy balance and body weight. The reports also describe the need to develop valid and reliable measures and tools to evaluate nutrition environments and policies.

*Healthy Eating Research*, a national program of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF), supports studies to identify and evaluate policies and environmental approaches that have the greatest potential to improve children's diets and to reverse the nation's rising levels of childhood obesity. This program parallels and complements RWJF's *Active Living Research* program which is building evidence to inform effective policy and environmental strategies to increase physical activity among children and adolescents ([www.activelivingresearch.org](http://www.activelivingresearch.org)).

RWJF is committed to tackling childhood obesity and the threat it poses to the health of our nation's children and families. The Foundation's goal is to reverse the epidemic of childhood obesity by 2015 by promoting healthy eating and physical activity in schools and communities throughout the

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United States. *The Foundation places special emphasis on reaching the children at greatest risk for obesity: African-American, Hispanic, Native American and Asian/Pacific Islander children, and children living in low-income communities.*

RWJF also is committed to attracting and supporting researchers who can expand the diversity of perspectives that inform RWJF programming. Through the *New Connections Initiative*, RWJF encourages scholars from historically disadvantaged and underrepresented communities to apply for research funding on topics of interest to RWJF. Investigators from historically disadvantaged and underrepresented communities include individuals from ethnic or racial minorities, people from low-income communities, and first-generation college graduates.

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**A Collaborative Effort  
Between Healthy Eating  
Research and the  
New Connections  
Initiative**

This call for proposals (CFP) offers a special funding opportunity from RWJF: New Connections grants through the Healthy Eating Research program.

Healthy Eating Research is a five-year, \$16-million RWJF national program. Its goals are to:

- establish a strong research base regarding policy and environmental factors that influence healthy eating and body weight in children, as well as effective policy and environmental strategies for reversing the childhood obesity epidemic;
- build a vibrant, multidisciplinary field of research and a diverse network of researchers; and
- ensure that findings are effectively communicated to inform policy debates and guide the development of effective solutions.

Healthy Eating Research issues CFPs to solicit scientifically rigorous, solution-oriented proposals from investigators and scholars representing diverse disciplines and backgrounds. *The program's overall aim is to provide key decision- and policy-makers in many sectors with evidence to guide and accelerate effective action to reverse the childhood obesity epidemic.*

New Connections grants through Healthy Eating Research have the same goals, but with an added emphasis on attracting *junior investigators* from historically disadvantaged and underrepresented communities.

Healthy Eating Research will provide funding for up to three New Connections *junior investigator* awards with this special solicitation. Each grant will be for 12 to 24 months. All projects must last at least 12 months. Funding may not exceed \$50,000 in each 12-month period.

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New Connections grantees funded through Healthy Eating Research will be part of a broader network of grantees from both the RWJF New Connections Initiative and the Healthy Eating Research program.

New Connections grants through Healthy Eating Research will support the career development of investigators who are at the early stages of an independent research career. These researchers will be offered technical assistance and a structured mentoring program.

We envision that this opportunity will enhance research careers and establish a diverse and multidisciplinary network of researchers committed to finding solutions to reverse the childhood obesity epidemic, especially among children at greatest risk for obesity and related health problems. This offering also will advance the field by building a strong research base about policy and environmental determinants of healthy eating and body weight in children, as well as effective policy and environmental strategies to reverse the trend in prevalence of childhood obesity in populations at greatest risk.

All applicants must submit a proposal for a research project, including research aims and hypothesis, research plan and study design, timeline and budget.

All grants are awarded to the applicant's home institution. All affiliated academic or other institutions are required to submit financial reports and other grant-related information on behalf of the investigators.

### ***Products***

*Junior investigators* are expected to submit at least one paper from their Healthy Eating Research project to a peer-reviewed journal and will be encouraged to develop proposals for follow-on research grants and applications.

### ***Mentoring Program***

The Healthy Eating Research program will provide structured mentoring to *junior investigators* to enhance their development as successful, competitive independent investigators. Grantees also will receive assistance in developing an individually tailored mentoring program, including access to a pool of consultants. Upon receiving the grant award, and in conjunction with the Healthy Eating Research program, each grantee will select a primary mentor with expertise appropriate to the grantee's specific research project and broader career development needs. The mentor and investigator will

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meet initially during a mentor/investigator training workshop and will develop goals, an organized plan, timeline and communications strategy.

During the course of the grant, consultants also will be available for technical assistance as needed. For example, technical assistance mentors could provide support for: strategies to recruit study subjects, survey development, data-collection measures, statistical analysis, publication writing, presentation skills and grant-writing skills for follow-on funding.

### ***Terminology***

For the purposes of this CFP:

- ***Healthy eating*** refers to eating the recommended types and amounts of foods, nutrients and calories recommended in the Dietary Guidelines for Americans, while limiting low-nutrient, high-fat and high-sugar foods and beverages to promote health and achieve and maintain an optimum body weight and energy balance. Healthy eating covers the consumption of healthy foods and beverages.
- ***Food environments*** refer to a child's physical environment, such as child care, school, after-school programs, and food outlets (e.g., corner stores, grocery stores, restaurants) where children and their families make food purchases and food decisions. These environments influence children's food choices and intake through food access, availability, characteristics (e.g., energy density and portion size) and promotion (e.g., price, placement and packaging). These environments are affected by broader ***macro-level influences and policies***, such as food marketing, government regulations, agricultural policies, and market and economic factors.
- ***Food policies*** refer to regulations, laws, policy-making actions or formal or informal rules established by formal organizations or government units. In the context of this CFP, policies are those that influence the food environment and shape or guide eating behavior to improve children's eating and body weight.
- ***Environmental interventions*** involve: 1) changing physical surroundings or settings; 2) access, availability or information about foods at the point of purchase; or 3) organizational systems to promote dietary behavior change and reduce obesity risk.

## About this Special Solicitation

### Round 2: Food Environments and Policies in Targeted Areas

The Special Solicitation Round 2 of Healthy Eating Research focuses on studies of policy and environmental strategies in four areas: food pricing and economic approaches; food and beverage marketing and promotion; improving access to affordable healthy foods in low-income communities; and evaluations of other promising food-related policy and environmental strategies.

Target populations include children and adolescents ages 3 to 18, especially in the low-income and racial/ethnic populations at highest risk for obesity.

#### *Funding and Types of Studies*

Up to three New Connections *junior investigator* grants will be awarded in this round of funding. There are two major categories of funding:

1. *Small-scale studies* to identify environmental determinants or evaluate changes to the food environment or policies in the four targeted areas. (12- to 24-month awards of up to \$100,000)
2. *Macro-level analyses* of food and beverage policies and environmental approaches related to the four targeted areas. (12- to 24-month awards of up to \$75,000)

#### *Small-scale Studies*

Small-scale studies could include the following:

- Experimental or quasi-experimental studies, including laboratory simulations (such as altering the food environment through changes in pricing, portion size, packaging, or point-of-purchase information);
- “Natural experiments” and other studies that evaluate the impact of environmental changes or national, state or local policy changes;
- Secondary analyses of existing data sets (such as cross-sectional or longitudinal analyses) to analyze the impact of natural variation in food policies and environments;
- Financial or cost-benefit studies evaluating the economic impacts of changes in food environment or policy; and
- Measurement-development studies to:
  - develop, adapt, test and validate tools and methods that can be used to identify and evaluate food polices and environments and their impact in a variety of settings; and/or
  - develop practical, validated audit tools that predict healthy eating and/or weight outcomes and can be used by practitioners and community members to assess and document food environments and polices across communities, neighborhoods and specific settings (e.g., schools, grocery/convenience stores).

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Small-scale studies may include correlational studies, secondary data analyses or limited original data collection. These small-scale studies may include experimental studies, laboratory simulations or measurement development studies. For example, adaptation of existing measures to unique populations or communities may be conducted. They also may include pre-test or baseline evaluations prior to planned environmental or policy changes, or post-test evaluations when baseline data are available.

### *Analyses of Macro-level Policies and Environmental Approaches*

Macro-level “upstream” policy and environmental factors work at the highest levels of influence and have impact at the population level. The quality and types of foods available to children are the result of macro-level systems and policies (e.g., agricultural, federal food assistance programs, legal) and market forces (e.g., economic and price structures, food marketing) that represent potentially powerful levers for change. These important upstream influences have the potential for wider population impacts. Currently, there is little understanding of and limited research on these environmental factors and the roles they could play in creating healthier food environments and policies. Research could analyze past and present upstream factors and generate imaginative policy ideas for creating healthier food environments.

The aim of projects that analyze the impact of macro-level factors is to understand the larger environmental and policy determinants of the foods, beverages and calories consumed by children and to identify the most salient focal points for efforts to reverse the childhood obesity epidemic. Analytic methods may include, but are not limited to, historical analysis, policy analysis, legal analysis, economic analysis, market analysis, statistical and simulation modeling, use of existing databases, and case studies.

### *Targeted Areas*

All proposed studies in response to this CFP must address one or more of the four targeted areas outlined below. Examples of studies that may be funded through this initiative are included under each topic area below. Studies need not be limited to these examples. We rely on the expertise and creativity of researchers to generate the best ideas for solution-oriented environmental and policy research.

#### **1. Food pricing and economic approaches.**

The cost of food to children and their families as direct consumers, and to intermediary purchasers (e.g., schools, food retailers, restaurants, government food assistance programs), is an important determinant of food choice and diet. Food supply trends and obesity rates are strongly influenced by the

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economics of food choices. Highly processed, low-nutrition foods that are also high in calories and fat are now widely accessible in the marketplace at a low cost. On the other hand, fruits and vegetables are often more expensive than many processed high-fat or high-sugar foods. Research suggests that changing the price of foods influences their purchase. But many questions remain about the best ways to utilize pricing to influence public health. Studies are needed to document how food prices and changes in food prices relate to children's diet and caloric intake at the population level and in a variety of populations and settings (e.g., government-supported food assistance programs, grocery and convenience stores, restaurant and fast-food outlets, school cafeterias). There is also a need to evaluate price-related interventions in real-world settings for their effects on children's diet quality and weight status. Studies also are needed to identify the important modifiable macro-level determinants of the costs of healthy/unhealthy foods to help clarify the economics of price and market factors and identify possible levers for change.

### *Examples of Possible Topics*

#### *Small-scale studies*

- Economic analyses of the costs of a healthy youth diet in a variety of settings (e.g., schools, communities, grocery stores) and/or sociodemographic groups.
- Analyses of the individual differences that influence consumers' sensitivity to increased prices of less healthy foods or reduced prices of healthy foods (e.g., socioeconomic status, ethnic group, food preferences, weight status, age).
- Examining if incentive systems can be developed that are individualized and built into individual food store purchases, so that youth and families would get greater discounts if they purchased healthier foods.
- Studies examining how best to measure the food pricing that children, adolescents or families encounter with accurate and reliable methods, including how sale offerings and coupon use affect the measurement efforts.

#### *Analyses of macro-level approaches*

- Analyses of the upstream macro-level determinants of food prices, including the effects of trade and agricultural (e.g., agricultural commodities and commodity farm prices) policies and food production and marketing costs.
- Studies of the cost-effectiveness of subsidizing healthy foods or increasing prices of less healthy foods versus other approaches to improving eating behaviors and reducing childhood obesity.

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## 2. Food and beverage marketing and promotion.

Advertising and marketing of foods and beverages aimed at children and youth influence their diet and health. Over the past 15 years, children and adolescents have been exposed to an increasing and unprecedented amount of advertising, marketing and commercialism through a wide range of approaches and venues. The Institute of Medicine's *Food Marketing to Children and Youth* report concluded that food and beverage marketing practices geared to children and youth are out of balance with recommended healthful diets and contribute to an environment that puts their health at risk. The four traditional components of marketing include not only price, as discussed above, but also product (e.g., features such as taste, portion size, packaging), placement (e.g., location, outlets, distribution points used to reach target markets), and promotion (e.g., nutrition information and advertising via multiple channels). Some food and beverage companies are beginning to take steps to change the way their products are marketed to children, but so far are doing so on a voluntary and limited basis. Research is needed on how marketing influences the food and beverage choices and weight status of children and youth, and how marketing techniques and social marketing promotions can be used to promote healthier eating among youth to reduce obesity.

### *Examples of Possible Topics*

#### *Small-scale studies*

- Experimental studies altering the environment through replicable changes in one or more of the following: portion size, packaging, placement, promotion activities, point-of-purchase information, front-of-pack caloric labeling of foods, or restaurant menu or package/table/tray labeling.
- Observational studies of the extent and/or impact of marketing, advertising or promotion in different settings (e.g., schools, child care, grocery stores, communities, youth sports programs) or directed at different populations (e.g., low- vs. high-income neighborhoods).
- Secondary data analyses that link commercial data on advertising of healthy and unhealthy foods to data on food and beverage consumption or weight outcomes among children and youth in diverse populations.
- Studies that document the extent, content and potential impact of new food and beverage advertising and marketing approaches (e.g., digital media) directed at children in varied socioeconomic and racial/ethnic populations.
- Studies evaluating the impact of youth exposure to different types of food and beverage advertising and marketing, including counter-marketing campaigns or social marketing to promote healthy eating.

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*Studies of macro-level approaches*

- Analysis of legal or regulatory policy approaches to advertising and marketing aimed at children and adolescents.

### **3. Improving access to affordable healthy foods in low-income communities.**

Many low-income urban communities, poor rural communities and Indian reservations have been described as “food deserts” due to the limited availability of affordable fresh fruits, vegetables and other foods critical to a healthy diet. Some low-income inner-city communities are undergoing changes, such as introducing supermarkets and farmers’ markets, farm-to-school programs, grocery buses, and community investments (e.g., tax abatements, fast track permitting and or low-cost loans to retail grocery stores serving underserved populations). They also are improving the quality and quantity of healthy foods in corner and convenience stores, and expanding healthy affordable menu items in local restaurants and fast-food establishments. States are showing growing interest in legislation to increase access to fresh fruits and vegetables in low-income communities, such as by increasing financing for locating grocery stores and supermarkets in low-income urban and rural areas. But there is limited evidence about the impact of these strategies on children’s access to or consumption of healthy foods or weight status. One barrier to such research has been the lack of valid and reliable measures of the critical food environments and policies affecting children’s food access and consumption in high-risk communities.

#### *Examples of Possible Topics*

##### *Small-scale studies*

- Analyses of socioeconomic and racial/ethnic disparities in access to healthy and less healthy foods and beverages in a variety of community venues (e.g., grocery stores, convenience stores, restaurants, farmers’ markets).
- Studies of policy/environmental interventions designed to alter children’s food access and consumption in high-risk communities, including those that take advantage of natural experiments.
- Studies to develop and pilot test measures of access to healthy foods in venues such as farmers’ markets and mobile food vendors, as well as measures targeted to ethnic minority communities.
- Simulation modeling to estimate relative population impacts of varied interventions.

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*Studies of macro-level approaches*

- Analysis of the modifiable determinants of current sociodemographic disparities in children's access to and consumption of healthy/unhealthy foods and strategies for altering these determinants (e.g., analysis of zoning codes and regulation policies in low-income communities).
- Analyses of the types of initiatives needed to increase access to affordable and high-quality healthful foods through retail grocery outlets in low-income areas.
- Documenting successful case studies of community-based partnerships in implementing retail grocery programs in underserved areas or increasing access to healthy foods or limiting unhealthy foods in low-income areas.
- Examining the development and building of support and advocacy efforts for state and federal policies that support retail grocery development in low-income underserved areas.

**4. Identifying or evaluating policy and environmental interventions with high potential to improve healthy eating, energy balance and body weight.**

Building on previous rounds of Healthy Eating Research funding, this topic area includes studies of policy and environmental determinants of children's access to and consumption of healthy foods in diverse settings (e.g., child care, school, after school, community settings) and populations, and of interventions to modify those determinants. The Institute of Medicine report *Progress in Preventing Childhood Obesity: How Do We Measure Up?* emphasized the importance of evaluating promising policy and environmental changes to build evidence of what works to reverse the rise in childhood obesity prevalence. Solution-oriented studies and those with high potential for population impact are especially needed.

*Examples of Possible Topics*

*Small-scale studies*

- Comparative studies of state or local policies limiting foods and beverages sold or provided in schools, child care and/or restaurants/fast-food establishments and their impact on child and adolescent food consumption or weight status.
- Examination of unintended consequences and/or limitations of environmental changes and food policies on healthy eating in children and youth.
- Development of independent and dependent measures for studies of varied food environments, including studies of the sensitivity of existing measurement tools and audits of environmental and policy changes.

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### *Studies of macro-level approaches*

- Analysis of current national, state and local policies and legislation related to foods provided or sold in schools or child-care settings.
- Studies of the information and related needs of policy-makers at the local, state and national levels related to current efforts to introduce or oppose policy changes to improve healthy eating and reduce obesity in children and youth.

### *Study Guidelines*

- The particular outcome variables for grants may vary. Given the limited scope and short duration of these projects, measures of changes in weight or BMI are not required. However, applicants are encouraged to include objective measures of food purchases or dietary consumption and/or estimated impact on caloric intake and to assess variables likely to affect the impact and feasibility of the policy and environmental changes being studied (e.g., demographic variables, community characteristics, other contextual variables).
- With the exception of lower-cost experimental changes (e.g., studies that involve altering food prices, portion sizes or point-of-purchase information), it is expected that grant funds will be used only to cover the costs of evaluation, not the costs of the policy or environmental changes per se (e.g., food, training, implementation costs).
- Experimental studies or laboratory simulations must show promise for generalization to real-world community environments, especially in low-income and racial/ethnic populations. Studies conducted in real-world settings are preferred.
- Studies focused solely on behavior change at the individual level or nutrition education interventions will not be funded. However, studies could compare the impact of environmental changes with or without nutrition education or promotion, or could isolate effective components of a multicomponent intervention.
- Proposals must demonstrate the ability to produce new information about important, modifiable environmental and/or policy determinants of children's diet quality, energy balance and/or weight status, or about policy/environmental change strategies with strong potential to influence children's obesity-related dietary practices and reverse the rise in childhood obesity. Special consideration will be given to strategies that will benefit children in the low-income and racial or ethnic populations at greatest risk for obesity.

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- Researchers should seek input from relevant stakeholders—such as policy-makers, school or community leaders, parents and children—to help assure feasible and policy-relevant project goals and outcomes. Proposals should describe the input received from these stakeholders in designing the study and framing the research questions, and the strategies that will be used to communicate research results. Applicants should include at least one representative of the community or stakeholder group targeted (e.g., community leader, policy-maker) as a regular adviser to help assure that research and policy analyses reflect critical institutional, community and policy needs and issues.
  - Indirect costs (up to 12 percent) are included in the total project awards. Studies may be conducted as supplements to existing studies. Co-funding is welcome, with sources and amounts fully described in the proposal.

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### Eligibility Criteria

Investigators must:

- have completed a doctorate or terminal degree (e.g., Ph.D., M.D., J.D.) within the past seven years. Doctorate or terminal degrees must have been obtained after September 1, 2001;
- be a citizen or permanent resident of the United States or its territories;
- be affiliated with or sponsored by a university or an organization that is tax-exempt under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code and is not a private Foundation under Section 509(a) of the Code. The sponsoring institution must agree to receive and administer the grant;
- be from a group that has been historically disadvantaged and underrepresented in research. This includes people from ethnic or racial minorities, first-generation college graduates and people from low-income communities;
- hold a position as a faculty member or other research position in a university setting, or hold an equivalent position in a non-university setting, such as an independent research organization;
- demonstrate evidence of research skills relevant to the proposed study;
- propose a project that spans 12 to 24 months in duration; and
- devote at least 25 percent of their time to the project.

## Selection Criteria

Proposals must demonstrate the ability to produce new information on food environment and/or policy change strategies relevant to children's obesity-related dietary practices and with strong potential to reverse the rise in childhood obesity. Special consideration will be given to strategies that will benefit children in the low-income and racial/ethnic populations at greatest risk for obesity.

To help build a multidisciplinary field of research, Healthy Eating Research seeks proposals from a variety of investigators in a range of fields, such as agriculture, behavioral science, business, economics, education, law, marketing, medicine, nutrition, political science, psychology, public health, public policy and urban planning. The perspectives of researchers who are knowledgeable about racial/ethnic and socioeconomic disparities in community settings and food environments are especially needed.

All proposals will be assessed by a committee composed of RWJF staff, NPO staff at the University of Minnesota, a senior program advisory panel and other expert reviewers.

The committee will use the following criteria to assess proposals:

- Significance and relevance of the proposal to the goals and targeted study topics of the Healthy Eating Research program, as described in this special solicitation.
- Qualifications of the applicant, including career goals, prior research training, research potential and relevant experience as it relates to the research approach.
- Soundness of the plan for the proposed research and its scientific merit.
- Scientific rigor of the proposed research and analytic methods, including quality of data to be used.
- Uniqueness of the project in relation to the mix of potentially fundable projects.

This funding initiative has a review committee that makes recommendations about grants to RWJF staff. RWJF will make all final grant decisions. RWJF does not provide individual critiques of proposals submitted.

## Evaluation and Monitoring

Grantees will be expected to meet RWJF requirements for the submission of narrative and financial reports. Given the benefit of measuring common outcomes across the pool of funded grants, funded projects may be asked to incorporate selected dependent, independent and contextual measures. As part of the proposal process, finalists will be asked to disclose any financial arrangements (e.g., fees, funding, employment, stock holdings) or relationships that might compromise the credibility or perceived credibility of the findings, mirroring the types of disclosure requested by the field's leading journals.

Grantees will be required to submit periodic information needed for overall project performance monitoring and management. Healthy Eating Research staff and consultants will be available to provide technical assistance when needed to ensure the success of the project. At the close of each grant, the grantee is expected to provide a written report on the project and its findings. Healthy Eating Research and RWJF staff will work with *junior investigators* to actively communicate the results of the funded projects to scientific audiences, media, policy-makers, school decision-makers, educational organizations, public health advocates, the general public and other audiences, as appropriate. An independent research group selected and funded by RWJF will conduct an evaluation of the Healthy Eating Research program. As a condition of accepting RWJF funds, grantees will be required to participate in the evaluation, and may be asked to adopt limited core dependent or independent measures to facilitate cross-study comparisons.

## Use of Grant Funds

RWJF grant funds may be used for project staff salaries (e.g., principal investigator, co-investigator, research assistant), consultant fees, data collection and analysis, dataset procurement, meetings, supplies, project-related travel and other direct project expenses, including a limited amount of equipment that is essential to the project. 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.

Grant funds also may be used to cover the costs associated with project-related travel. Awardees are required to travel to an annual New Connections Initiative meeting, as well as the annual Healthy Eating Research grantee meeting. Funds to attend these annual meetings in each year of funding should be included in the proposed budget. Budgets also should include travel to attend one additional Healthy Eating Research grantee meeting at the end of the grant period so that principal investigators can present their results. The full proposal application templates contain guidelines for travel budgeting. *Junior investigators* also may include travel expenses to present their research at one additional national professional meeting.

Mentors and other individuals providing technical assistance/consulting services to *junior investigators* will be funded separately by the Healthy Eating Research NPO; investigators will not need to cover these costs.

## How to Apply

*All proposals must be submitted only through the RWJF Grantmaking Online system.* For detailed formatting instructions and to prepare and submit your proposal, please go to <http://grantmaking.rwjf.org/hernc2>.

There are two stages in the competitive proposal process:

### *Stage 1: Brief Proposal*

Applicants must submit a brief proposal of no more than five pages that describes the project, including a preliminary budget.

### *Stage 2: Full Proposal*

Selected Stage 1 applicants will be invited by letter or e-mail to submit a full proposal of no more than 20 pages accompanied by a budget and budget narrative and additional supporting documents.

A Web conference call for brief proposal applicants will be held on Wednesday, January 9, 2008, to answer questions about the call for proposals, as well as the proposal and selection processes. Participation in this call is encouraged, but is not required. It is necessary to register in advance through the Healthy Eating Research Web site at [www.healthyeatingresearch.org](http://www.healthyeatingresearch.org).

Applicant information, including frequently asked questions (FAQs) and applicant resources, can be found at [www.healthyeatingresearch.org](http://www.healthyeatingresearch.org).

For more information about this funding opportunity, please contact:  
Laura L. Klein, M.P.H., *research coordinator*  
Healthy Eating Research  
Phone: (800) 578-8636  
E-mail: [healthyeating@umn.edu](mailto:healthyeating@umn.edu)

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## Program Direction

Direction and technical assistance for this program are provided by the University of Minnesota, which serves as the NPO.

Responsible staff members at the NPO are:

- Mary Story, Ph.D., R.D., *program director*
- Karen M. Kaphingst, M.P.H., *deputy director*
- Robert Jeffery, Ph.D., *senior adviser*
- Melissa C. Nelson, Ph.D., R.D., *faculty research associate*
- Laura L. Klein, M.P.H., *research coordinator*

Responsible staff members at the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation are:

- C. Tracy Orleans, Ph.D., *distinguished fellow and senior scientist*
- Debra Joy Pérez, Ph.D., *senior program officer, New Connections Initiative*
- James Marks, M.D., M.P.H., *senior vice president and director, Health Group*
- Laura Leviton, Ph.D., *senior program and evaluation officer*
- Jan Mihalow, M.S.M., *grants administrator*
- Kathryn Thomas, M.J., *senior communications officer*
- Prabhu Ponkshe, M.A., L.L.B., *communications consultant*

This program's senior program advisory panel is chaired by Shiriki Kumanyika, Ph.D., M.P.H.

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## Other Grant Opportunities

The Healthy Eating Research Special Solicitation Round 2 for New Connections *junior investigator* grants is parallel to the Healthy Eating Research Round 3 CFP, available at [www.healthyeatingresearch.org](http://www.healthyeatingresearch.org). Both the Special Solicitation Round 2 and the Healthy Eating Research Round 3 CFP focus on children's food environments and policies in targeted settings. Target populations include children and adolescents ages 3 to 18.

The Special Solicitation Round 2 is open only to *junior investigators*. While investigators who are more advanced in their careers are not eligible for the Special Solicitation Round 2, they are eligible to apply for grants under the Healthy Eating Research Round 3 CFP. *Junior investigators* are eligible to apply for grants under both the Special Solicitation Round 2 and the Healthy Eating Research Round 3 CFP.

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## Timetable

- **December 7, 2007**  
RWJF Grantmaking Online system will be available to applicants.\*
  
- **January 9, 2008**  
Optional Web conference call for potential applicants. For complete details and to register, visit [www.healthyeatingresearch.org](http://www.healthyeatingresearch.org). Applicants will have an opportunity to ask questions during the conference call.
  
- **February 6, 2008 (3 p.m. ET)**  
Deadline for receipt of brief proposals.\*
  
- **April 9, 2008**  
Select applicants will be invited to submit full proposals.
  
- **May 22, 2008 (3 p.m. ET)**  
Deadline for receipt of full proposals.\*
  
- **Mid-July, 2008**  
Notification of finalists.
  
- **September 1, 2008**  
Awards begin.
  
- **October 15, 2008**  
Junior investigator and mentor meeting, for New Connections grants funded through Healthy Eating Research.
  
- **October 15–17, 2008**  
Healthy Eating Research Grantee Meeting

\* *All proposals must be submitted only through the RWJF Grantmaking Online system. All applicants should log in to the system and familiarize themselves with online submission requirements well before the final submission deadline. Program staff may not be able to assist all applicants in the final 24 hours before the submission deadline. In fairness to all applicants, the program will not accept late proposals.*

## 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 more than 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](http://www.rwjf.org).

Sign up to receive e-mail alerts on upcoming calls for proposals at [www.rwjf.org/services](http://www.rwjf.org/services).



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