



Reporting Projects on State Health System Equity

Introduction

The Commonwealth Fund is a nonprofit, nonpartisan foundation that supports independent research on health care issues and makes grants to promote better access, improved quality, and greater efficiency in health care, particularly for society's most vulnerable, including people of color, people with low income, and those who are uninsured.

Advancing racial equity in health care and dismantling systemic racism in health care practice and policy are top priorities of the Fund and its programs. The Fund seeks solutions that eliminate the profound disparities in health care access, experiences, quality, and outcomes that adversely affect the health and well-being of Black Americans, Indigenous Americans, and people of color.

As part of its efforts to build an equitable U.S. health care system, the Commonwealth Fund recently compiled a health-equity-focused state health system performance scorecard. Our team compiled data on how the health care system is working for people of color in every state. The resulting report, *Achieving Racial and Ethnic Equity in U.S. Health Care*, scores each state's health care system on 24 measures of health outcomes, health care access, and health care quality. It allows users to look within a state and compare how the health system is working for each racial and ethnic group represented in the data, and to look at one racial and ethnic group and see how state health systems rank for that group.

Funding Opportunity

While the data and findings from the health equity scorecard advance our understanding of the facts, they do not delve into people's lived health care experiences. To that end, the Commonwealth Fund is interested in supporting reporting projects that explore health equity issues raised by the scorecard in various states. Any of the topics covered by the scorecard are fair game for explorations of how historic and current federal and state health system policies either support or hinder racial and ethnic health equity in your state. There is no requirement that the scorecard be used, cited, or otherwise reported on as part of the projects — we only ask that the issues it raises be used as a frame for them.

We are particularly interested in solutions-focused stories: highlighting successes and innovations that have broken down structural and other barriers to good health for people of color. While we understand the critical importance of social determinants of health, the Commonwealth Fund is focused on the ways that health outcomes are a direct reflection of health care policies and the health care system's successes and failures. Projects that focus on these areas are preferred.

We also encourage projects that have visual as well as written elements and welcome proposals that include photography/audio or video components.

As a funder of health journalism initiatives, the Commonwealth Fund understands and respects journalistic independence, boundaries, and integrity.

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Award Size

The Commonwealth Fund is offering up to 10 awards of \$15,000 each for projects that meet the guidelines described above. The award may be used to support personnel and other expenses related to the reporting project. Projects must be completed six to nine months following the award date.

Eligibility

Nonprofit news organizations that have received a federal tax exemption from the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code are eligible to apply.

To Apply

Go to the [Commonwealth Fund grants portal](#), register, and submit an application through the portal. The application comprises a brief proposal (described below), an IRS tax determination letter, and most recent audited financial statements, organization budget, and revenue sources.

The one- to two-page proposal should include the following:

- Project summary
- Anticipated deliverables (approximate number of stories/visual and other elements)
- Dissemination tactics
- News outlet description, including history, mission, and approximate audience size
- Staffing description
- Proposed expenses to be covered by grant funds. The application does not require a project budget.

Selection Process

Projects will be reviewed and approved on a rolling basis until November 1, 2022. Applicants will be notified of funding decisions within a month of submission.

Questions?

For questions about your organization's eligibility or the proposed project, contact Maureen Deboo (md@cmwf.org). For technical questions about the grants portal, contact grants@cmwf.org.