

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL
Equity & Health Reporting Initiative

OVERVIEW

The twin crises of the pandemic and anti-racism uprisings have laid bare deeply rooted systemic inequities and racial inequalities that have long plagued our nation. Every day we see the insidious and disproportionate impact the virus, racism, poverty and other structural inequities have wreaked on the **health, safety and well-being** of millions of Americans, particularly African Americans, communities of color, the poor and working-class, the unhoused, immigrants, the rural poor, the unemployed and the uninsured.

As a result, many are calling for an “American reckoning”—a re-examination of the foundations of our society and asking how we might emerge from this period of turmoil a fairer, more just and more equitable nation.

In light of this unprecedented inflection point, Renaissance Journalism is launching the “**Equity and Health Reporting Initiative.**” The project’s goal is to stimulate ambitious and innovative news media coverage, storytelling projects and/or community engagement activities in the SF Bay Area that explore the complex intersections between individual and community health and the systemic inequities, particularly racism and economic inequality, that impact them in profound and myriad ways.

Additionally, we are seeking projects that include critical analysis of the short- and/or long-term remedies and reforms that are developed to address the systemic inequities in health and health care. Will these reforms result in significant and enduring systemic and social change or are they temporary stop-gap measures to get us through these crises?

OUR REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Renaissance Journalism is accepting proposals from Bay Area news media organizations, journalists and other storytellers for **ambitious, in-depth and community-centric health reporting projects** that explore and investigate the disproportionate impact of systemic inequities—exposed by the twin crises of 2020—on the health and well-being of our region’s most vulnerable communities (*continued on the next page*).

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We define “health” in broad terms. It includes individual and family health, health of all age groups (babies to seniors), mental health, public health, the social welfare system, health care access, the health and well-being of a community, etc.

The range of topics/issues you can address is also wide-ranging, so long as you show the interconnections between the issue and health. **To jumpstart your thinking, we’ve listed a few topic ideas on page 5.** We encourage you to propose a project that is relevant to the needs of the communities you serve; that will spark dialogue; and that can impact public policy and promote positive social change.

Grant sizes will range from \$10,000 to \$20,000, depending upon the scope, complexity and creativity of the project. We hope that our grant enables you to undertake a new or innovative project that you could not do otherwise.

Grantees will also be invited to attend a series of online networking meet-ups, as well as educational webinars featuring experts and community leaders on equity and health.

PROPOSAL DEADLINE: August 10, 2020

WHO SHOULD APPLY

- Bay Area journalists from all media, including print, TV, multimedia, online, etc.
- Bay Area news organizations, large and small, including mainstream, ethnic and community-based news media, nonprofit news organizations, etc.
- Independent journalists, photographers, filmmakers and other storytellers.

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PROPOSAL GUIDELINES & REQUIREMENTS

As we review your proposal, we are looking for projects that:

- **Explore and investigate a clearly defined health issue that is relevant to the audiences/communities you serve.**
- **Adopt a “systems and structural approach” to your reporting and storytelling.**

This is critical. The project should “connect the dots” and provide context for a complex social justice issue. This approach means looking at the policies, root causes/systemic drivers and historical factors that contribute to, intersect with, and impact an issue.

- **Engage community members in the planning and execution of the project.**

We urge you to try new approaches to engaging your audiences/communities. Think beyond the traditional “town hall” meeting or project post-mortems most news organizations have convened for years. Involve community members directly in the planning, creation and implementation of your project.

- **Reveal and explore “new thinking” on the topic by seeking out a diverse range of sources.**

Rather than focusing on government officials, academics and CEOs for expert analysis, seek out new and diverse sources in your reporting. Consider reaching out to community members as experts and agents of change (eg. residents, renters, homeless families, activists, etc.) rather than as victims or individual characters in your stories.

- **Investigate and critically analyze short- and long-term reforms and remedies.**

What are the short- and long-term impacts of these reforms? Will they be enduring and result in significant positive social change or are they temporary, stop-gap measures?

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A NOTE ABOUT COLLABORATIVE PROJECTS

We welcome and encourage collaborative efforts, but they are not mandatory. Collaborative partners can include other news organizations, ethnic and community media outlets, nonprofit organizations, community residents, etc.

SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS CHECKLIST

Please go to Page 6 for instructions on how to prepare your proposal (including the questions to answer.)

- Describe your project (maximum 1,000 words).
- Answer the questions on page 7.
- PROJECT BUDGET:** Include an itemized breakdown of expenses.
- PRODUCTION TIMELINE:** We anticipate the grant period will begin early October 2020. **All project work must be completed by May 31, 2021.** A final grant report will be required in June 2021.
- Email your proposal with budget and timeline as attachments to info@renjournalism.org.

Equity & Health Reporting Initiative

Ideas for Health & Equity Topics

To jumpstart your brainstorming about your project, here are some broad-stroke health and equity topics and issues to consider. There are many others, so please don't feel restricted or bound by these. Think about the people and communities your news organization serves. What are the most pressing issues they face? What stories have not been told that should be told?

- How do chronic racism, poverty, unsafe neighborhoods and/or health care inequities contribute to and result in the disproportionate disease burden plaguing African Americans, Latinx, Native Americans, Asian Pacific Islanders, etc. during the pandemic?
- How do pollution and environmental hazards in low-income areas affect the pandemic's health impacts for those living in those communities?
- What has the pandemic exposed about health disparities and access to healthcare In the Bay Area? Compare side-by-side neighborhoods and ask, "What is causing this disparity?"
- What is the impact of COVID-19 on the health of those living and working in rural areas? For example, how have migrant farmworkers been affected by the pandemic?
- What did the pandemic expose about how deteriorating and poorly maintained rental housing impacts people's health and well-being? What about overcrowding, which is common in low-income neighborhoods and has been exacerbated during the pandemic?
- What were the health impacts of the pandemic on "essential workers," many of whom were people of color and/or working-class?
- Has there been an increase in domestic violence cases in your city, county or region since the COVID-19 outbreak and lock-down? What is the impact of this trauma on the physical and mental health of the women, men, children and families affected by abuse?
- The pandemic exposed how serious the issue of food insecurity is in the Bay Area. What is the impact of food insecurity on children's ability to learn and grow; on seniors who are on fixed incomes; on the unhoused?

PROPOSAL SUBMISSION
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INSTRUCTIONS FOR WRITING & SUBMITTING YOUR PROPOSAL

Your proposal must include the information below, including a narrative description of your proposed project (1,000 words max.); answers to the numbered questions below; and a budget and timeline.

Email your proposal to info@renjournalism.org.

If you have questions about this RFP, please email us or call 510-593-7099.

DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION: Monday, August 10, 2020

Your Name:

Title:

Organization:

Email Address:

Mailing Address:

Phone

- Work:**
- Cell:**

Is your organization/news outlet a nonprofit? Yes or No

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PROPOSAL SUBMISSION
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Your Project Pitch:

Briefly describe your proposed project in 500-1,000 words.

Additionally, please answer the following questions as they relate to your proposed project:

1. What is the specific health issue or topic you will be addressing in your project? What is the “health angle”?
2. How will you address and analyze the policies, root causes and/or historical factors that contribute to, intersect with, and impact the issue you are tackling?
3. What strengths or special qualities do you and/or your news organization possess that make you uniquely qualified or positioned to take on the proposed project?
4. How will you involve and engage community members in the planning and implementation of your reporting project? Please be specific.
5. What “new thinking” on the proposed topic will you provide? What new and diverse sources will you seek out in your reporting? For example, do you plan to reach out to community members as experts and agents of change, rather than as victims or individual characters in your stories? What new voices will you amplify in your stories?
6. What short- and long-term remedies or reforms do you plan to address and analyze related to your topic?
7. How will this grant enable you and/or your news organization to take on a more ambitious and innovative reporting project, one that you typically don’t have the capacity or ability to consider?

Attach the following to your proposal:

- Budget
- Timeline