
Zoom On: Susannah Fox, Entrepreneur in Residence



Susannah Fox

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Entrepreneur in Residence -
Robert Wood Johnson Foundation
(RWJF)

Susannah Fox is the second Entrepreneur in Residence at the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF), the largest philanthropic organisation in the US devoted solely to public health. The Entrepreneur in Residence is an experimental position which Fox assumed in September 2014. According to the RWJF website, Fox “excels at using data and storytelling to compel policymakers, consumers, and entrepreneurs to understand and discuss key health care issues.” She supports the Foundation by contributing input and strategic advice for the Foundation’s priorities, and by writing about new ideas in healthcare.

Fox is only the second Entrepreneur in Residence at RWJF, following Thomas Goetz, the former executive editor of *WIRED* and founder of Iodine. Goetz helped the Foundation to develop initiatives focused on new approaches to the patient-provider encounter and best practices in data visualisation for communicating health information.

Building a Culture of Health

One of the priorities of RWJF is building a “Culture of Health” in which all citizens will lead healthier lives and experience improved medical care. In a society as large and diverse as that of the United States, such a culture can only be achieved by promoting change through collaboration and the sharing of ideas, evidence and expertise.

The talents that Fox brings to the Foundation have been built through experience with online patient communities, especially those comprised of people who live with chronic or rare diseases. Her skills in networking and trend-spotting are expected to serve the Foundation as it seeks new opportunities for partnering with entrepreneurs and leaders who will bring innovation to the field of healthcare. The social impact of technology is a big focus.

Pew Research Center: Internet & American Life Project

Prior to joining RWJF, Fox spent 14 years at the Pew Research Center (PRC) as the director of their health and technology portfolio. From 2000 to 2014, Fox was an associate director of PRC’s Internet & American Life Project, which documents the interaction of healthcare and technology on a cultural level. There, she combined conventional survey research with fieldwork among online communities of patients. Topics of Fox’s research include peer-to-peer healthcare, the way people with chronic diseases use the internet to connect with information and each other, and “the social life of health information”.

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Blogging and Speaking

In addition to her formal role at RWJF, Fox frequently speaks to audiences about the ways that data, social media and technology can be used to support public health. Her personal blog, susannahfox.com, is one of several online forums to which she contributes; others include e-patients.net and medium.com. According to her blog, Fox helps people to navigate health and technology. Her research has contributed to numerous plans, proposals and publications over the past 15 years.

Fox is an advisor to Iodine, SMART Platforms and Stanford Medicine X. She was employed at RealNetworks during its start-up phase in the mid-1990s, after which she served as the website editor of *U.S. News & World Report* for five years. She studied at Smith College before earning a degree in anthropology from Wesleyan University in 1992.

Fox will be a featured speaker at the Connected Health Symposium in Boston in October 2015.

Sources: LinkedIn, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, susannafox.com

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