

Raising the Roof: America's Housing Crisis and Our Longer Lives



Call for Applicants - Age Boom Academy 2023
Application deadline: July 21, 2023 | ageboom.columbia.edu

The Columbia Journalism School and the Columbia Aging Center will host the 2023 virtual **Robert N. Butler-Jack Rosenthal Age Boom Academy: "Raising the Roof: America's Housing Crisis and Our Longer Lives"** over four two-hour online sessions on October 19, 20, 26, 27 as well as three 60-minute mixers on October 4, 18 and 25. You may consult the exact schedule at ageboom.columbia.edu.

The deadline for journalists to [apply](#) is July 21, 2023

The Age Boom Academy is Columbia University's signature media training program for reporting on the opportunities and challenges of increased longevity. The 2023 edition will focus on the housing crisis facing older Americans. Seven years from now, all Baby Boomers will be over 65 — representing 21% of our population. Beyond 2030, the U.S. population is projected to age considerably and become more racially and ethnically diverse. Simply put, we know this generation and the ones to follow will live long lives. But where? And how well? And most importantly, how will housing affect their state of health?

A record low inventory of housing coupled with an overheated real estate market is placing undue pressure on urban and rural communities, particularly communities of color. Long-term care options, and in particular nursing homes, have taken a reputational hit due to the pandemic, with most Americans hoping to age in place. But home-repair programs and local care services are not at scale for older adults. Housing stock and zoning laws have grown outdated. There is also a need to address housing for LGBTQ+ older adults who face discrimination in nursing homes and senior housing.

In the eye of this perfect storm of a housing crisis, the most vulnerable older Americans are tipping into increased precarity. In New York City between 2004-17, for example, the number of unhoused older adults 65+ increased 300% driven by the lack of affordable housing and gap in the number of public housing units. This figure is projected to triple again by 2030 if nothing is done. This training will help journalists bring a 'healthy aging and equity' lens to stories about affordable

housing. Without secure housing options, Americans' best odds of living healthier longer will be reserved for only the wealthiest.

The Academy will cover the many socioeconomic, health, civic and urban planning issues associated with this crisis and will demonstrate how a dearth of affordable, safe and supportive housing compounds cumulative disadvantage across the life course and is a critical threat to equitable access to healthy longevity.

From the challenge of this moment in housing, we have an opportunity to envision a paradigmatic shift in housing to better promote healthy aging.

This training will be a unique opportunity for a competitively selected group of journalists from all media to explore with us (1) the specific challenges faced by older adults in the housing crisis with emphasis on a social justice perspective, (2) the innovative way forward to new funding models that bring about not only safe and affordable housing but also housing and physical environments that proactively promote successful aging-in-community and connectivity based on findings from the National Academy of Medicine Global Roadmap for Healthy Longevity, and (3) the local and national policies that are needed to address inadequate affordable and public housing options and to fund supportive services.

If you are an on-staff or freelance journalist, please apply to become a Fellow in this program co-led by **Linda P. Fried**, MD, MPH, Dean, Columbia Mailman School of Public Health; and **Bruce Shapiro**, Executive Director, Dart Center for Journalism and Trauma and Columbia Journalism School faculty. Accepted Fellows will convene with researchers for intensive, multi-session, online workshops focused on how to report effectively on the complex interplay of increased longevity, cumulative disadvantage, and the U.S. housing crisis. This topic crosscuts journalistic beats, regions and markets; reporters and editors from any sector are encouraged to apply.

During Age Boom, Fellows will learn about the issues and envision new angles to enhance reporting. Fellows will have access to experts via one-on-one interviews and will participate in informal breakout discussions with grassroots changemakers. Fellows will also join several mixers to get to know one another and our experienced moderators from digital, broadcasting and print to deepen plans for getting new, impactful stories.

Experts will include nearly two dozen top national researchers, advocates, developers and practitioners. Noted journalists on the aging beat will facilitate the panel sessions: **Richard Eisenberg** (MarketWatch "unretirement" columnist and former managing editor at Next Avenue), **Paula Span** (New York Times The New Old Age columnist), **Michelle Cottle** (New York Times editorial writer), **Chris Farrell** (Public Media's Marketplace), **Kerry Hannon** (senior columnist Yahoo Finance and New York Times contributor) and **Carol Hymowitz** (former editor Bloomberg News and The Wall Street Journal).

There is **no cost** for accepted Fellows to attend but we expect Fellows to generate reporting. Full [FAQs](#) and [application](#) available at: ageboom.columbia.edu

CONTACT: Caitlin Hawke, Associate Director, Programming, Columbia Aging Center •
cmh2197@columbia.edu

Funded by a generous grant from the RRF Foundation on Aging