



TUFH USA: Advancing Social Accountability in U.S. Public Health Education

As schools and programs of public health confront widening health inequities, workforce shortages, and growing expectations for community impact, the question is no longer *whether* institutions should be socially accountable—but *how* that accountability is defined, measured, and demonstrated. TUFH USA serves as the United States Center of Excellence for Social Accountability within **The Network: Towards Unity for Health (TUFH)**, an official non-state actor in formal relations with the World Health Organization (WHO). Together, TUFH USA and TUFH Global are advancing a standards-based, measurable approach to social accountability across health professions education and health care delivery.

TUFH USA partners with schools of public health, schools of medicine, schools of nursing, other health professions programs, and health care organizations committed to aligning education, research, and service with community-defined health priorities. Through a structured verification and certification pathway, TUFH USA supports institutions in assessing their current practices, strengthening community partnerships, and demonstrating progress toward equitable population health outcomes.

Why Social Accountability Matters

Social accountability calls on educational institutions and health organizations to orient their missions toward the priority health needs of the communities they serve. For **schools of public health**, this means aligning curricula, experiential learning, and research with population health needs, workforce realities, and health equity goals—while strengthening student learning outcomes and community trust. For **health care organizations and companies**, social accountability represents an evolution beyond traditional corporate social responsibility toward a model that emphasizes transparency, responsiveness, access, quality, and long-term societal impact.

As accreditation bodies, funders, and communities increasingly expect evidence of impact, social accountability offers a practical framework to connect institutional values with measurable outcomes.

The Social Accountability Recognition Pathway

TUFH USA offers a two-tiered recognition pathway that supports continuous improvement and public accountability:

- **Verified** status is achieved through completion of a social accountability application, a baseline self-assessment across twelve standards, and development of a targeted action plan.



- **Certified** status is awarded after three years, following a formal re-assessment that demonstrates measurable progress across the same standards.

This pathway emphasizes learning and improvement rather than compliance, allowing institutions to advance at a pace appropriate to their context while maintaining rigor and transparency.

The Indicators for Social Accountability Tool (ISAT)

At the core of the recognition process is the **Indicators for Social Accountability Tool (ISAT)**, a structured self-assessment and improvement framework designed for health faculties and schools. ISAT includes twelve standards with tiered indicators across key domains:

1. Students
2. Faculty Recruitment
3. Faculty Development
4. Curriculum Content
5. Curriculum Learning Methods
6. Curriculum Types and Locations of Educational Experiences
7. Interprofessional Education and Collaborative Care
8. Community-Based Research
9. Governance
10. Stakeholder Partnership and Engagement
11. School Outcomes
12. Societal Impact

Institutions receive structured support throughout the process, including facilitated self-assessment, coaching on action planning, peer review to validate progress, and formal recognition with a public profile.

Membership and Opportunities for Schools of Public Health

TUFH USA invites schools of public health to join this national movement and to collaborate with peer institutions across disciplines and regions. Institutional membership is \$1,500 per year that includes 40 individual memberships for faculty, students, and partners and includes access to ISAT including guided support, formal review and evaluation, and full institutional membership in TUFH Global.

Additional Member benefits include access to TUFH fellowships, global courses and training programs, the annual TUFH Global Conference, quarterly learning and networking sessions, and an end-to-end verification and certification process that supports continuous improvement and recognition.

Looking Ahead: National Goals for 2025–2026



TUFH USA has set ambitious but achievable national goals for the coming year, including engaging five champion schools each in medicine, nursing, and public health to complete ISAT, along with five health care companies completing the Corporate Social Accountability tool. These efforts will be supported through quarterly or biannual national convenings aligned with existing conferences and events, fostering collaboration and shared learning across sectors.

By joining TUFH USA, schools of public health have an opportunity to lead the social accountability movement in the United States—strengthening their missions, advancing equity, and demonstrating their vital role in improving population health at local, national, and global levels.

Contact Information

Nancy L. Rothman, MSN, EdD, RN, FCPP

Professor Emerita, Department of Nursing

College of Public Health, Temple University

e-mail: rothman@temple.edu