



*National Institute for
Health Research*

Funding opportunities

for research and career development



*funding leading-edge research and
supporting research professionals*

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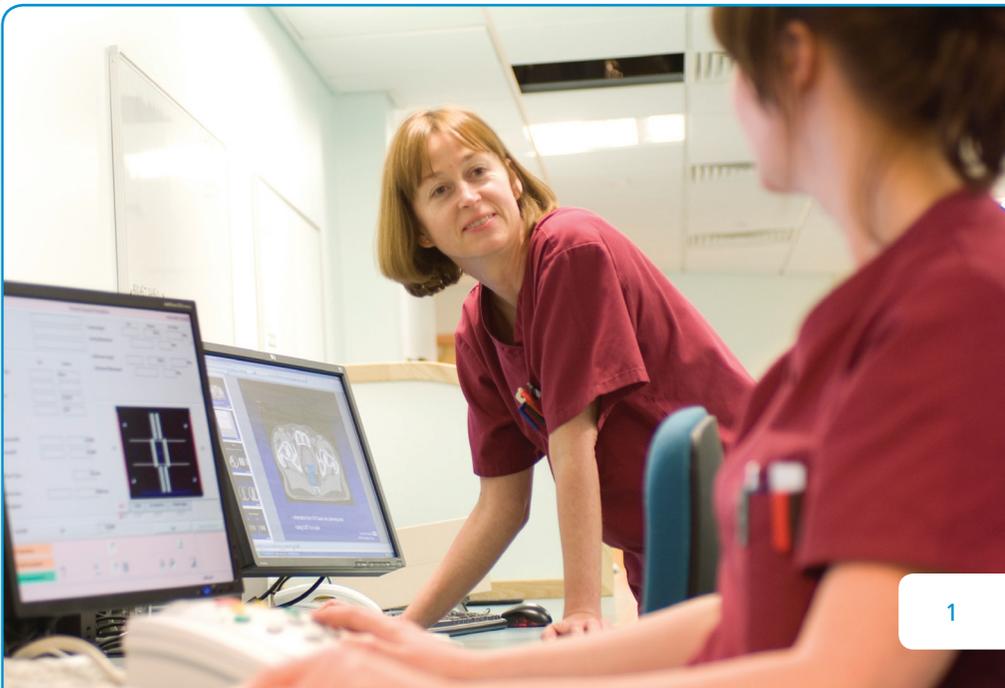
Introduction

The goal of the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) is to create a health research system in which the NHS supports outstanding individuals, working in world class facilities, conducting leading edge research focused on the needs of patients and the public.

The NIHR commissions and funds health, public health and social care research that is essential for improving the health and wealth of the nation. Our key objective is to improve the quality, relevance and focus of the research we commission by distributing funds in a transparent and accountable way through open competition and peer review.

The NIHR also funds career development for researchers whose work focuses on people and patient-based applied health research.

This booklet provides information about the NIHR's research funding and career development opportunities available for researchers based in the NHS, universities, industry and other organisations concerned with health, public health and social care.



Efficacy and Mechanism Evaluation (EME)

The EME Programme bridges the gap between pre-clinical studies and evidence of clinical efficacy. The aim is to secure the progress of new technologies and interventions through their early clinical trials and onto larger, later clinical trials. The EME Programme aims to support excellent clinical science with an ultimate view to improving health or patient care.

The EME Programme supports clinical trials and evaluative studies in patients which: evaluate clinical efficacy of interventions where proof of concept in humans has already been achieved; add significantly to our understanding of biological or behavioural mechanisms and processes; explore new scientific or clinical principles; and include the development or testing of new methodologies.

The EME Programme has two workstreams, researcher-led and commissioned. The commissioned workstream funds large, often staged, projects with clear milestones. Proposals may include pilot and feasibility studies and late development of technologies. Proposals are expected to be in the form of a substantial collaboration with at least two of the following three partners: industry, NHS and academia.

The researcher-led workstream offers researchers the opportunity to submit applications on a topic within its remit at three cut-off dates per year.

The EME Programme is funded by the Medical Research Council (MRC) and the NIHR. It is managed by the NIHR. Researchers in England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales are eligible to apply.

Calls/competitions
Application process
Alerts
Contact
Website

Researcher-led and commissioned calls
Typically two stage
www.eme.ac.uk/funding
info@eme.ac.uk
www.eme.ac.uk



Health Services and Delivery Research (HS&DR)

The HS&DR Programme funds research to produce rigorous and relevant evidence on the quality, access and organisation of health services. This includes evaluations of how the NHS might improve delivery of services. The audience for this research is the public, service users, clinicians and managers. The programme will enhance the strategic focus on research that matters to the NHS including research on implementation and a range of knowledge mobilisation initiatives.

The HS&DR Programme aims to support a range of types of research including evidence synthesis and primary research. This includes large scale studies of national importance.

The programme has two workstreams:

The **Healthcare Delivery Research (HDR)** workstream is mainly commissioned and focuses on evaluating models of service delivery and interventions which have the potential to improve the service effectiveness, efficiency and productivity of the NHS.

The **Health Services Research (HSR)** workstream is mainly researcher-led and focuses on research into the quality, appropriateness, effectiveness, equity and patient experience of health services.

Calls/Competitions Application process

Researcher-led and commissioned calls
Two stage (apart from Rapid Evidence Synthesis in the commissioned workstream)

Alerts and contacts Website

hsdrinfo@southampton.ac.uk
www.netscc.ac.uk/hsdr

Health Technology Assessment (HTA)

The HTA Programme delivers research information about the effectiveness, costs and broader impact of healthcare treatments and tests for those who plan, provide or receive care in the NHS. The term 'health technology' covers a range of methods used to promote health, prevent and treat disease and improve rehabilitation and long term care including drugs, devices, procedures, settings of care and screening.

Calls/Competitions **Application process**

Researcher-led and commissioned calls
Primary research – two stage*
Evidence synthesis/Secondary research – one stage*

Alerts and contacts **Website**

hta@hta.ac.uk
www.hta.ac.uk

*Flexible depending on the type of call



Invention for Innovation (i4i)

The **i4i Product Development Awards** support collaborative translational R&D projects that cultivate new techniques or technologies within innovative interventions to address existing or emerging healthcare needs. Led by experienced management teams, projects are informed by evidence already obtained through prior research, or are borne out of techniques or technologies used in sectors other than health.

The key aim is to encourage and provide support for projects which have a strong potential for commercialisation and acceptance for use within the NHS. Projects are expected to have a clear end product in view at all times. Applications submitted to i4i are assessed by one of two multidisciplinary selection panels consisting of individuals from industry, the NHS and academia.

A new funding stream, the **i4i Challenge Awards**, has been established to address the widely acknowledged gap that exists between the innovation and development of technology and its adoption into clinical pathways. Projects must be led by a clinician in an NHS Trust in England in cooperation with a university and/or the company commercialising the product. The purpose of the funding is to identify and support the application of emerging platform technologies and demonstrate their usefulness and broader applicability within the clinic.

Calls/Competitions
Application process
Alerts
Contact
Website

Researcher-led and commissioned calls
Two stage
www.nihr.ac.uk
i4i.programme@nihr-ccf.org.uk
www.i4i.nihr.ac.uk



Programme Grants for Applied Research (PGfAR)

PGfAR provides funding for major programmes of research that are a priority for the NHS.

These awards support work that will deliver findings with practical application, typically through improved healthcare or better healthcare delivery, within three to five years of a programme's end.

The programmes funded are interrelated groups of high quality research projects requiring a multidisciplinary approach, including input from clinical, health economics, statistics, qualitative and behavioural sciences backgrounds to ensure that research objectives can be met.

Calls/competitions	Researcher-led
Application process	Two stage
Alerts	www.nihr.ac.uk
Contact	programme.grants@nihr-ccf.org.uk
Website	www.pgfar.nihr.ac.uk

Programme Development Grants (PDG)

If aspects of a proposed Programme Grant application need preparatory work, Programme Development Grants are available to strengthen the basis for a full Programme Grant application.

Calls/competitions	Researcher-led
Application process	One stage
Alerts	www.nihr.ac.uk
Contact	programme.grants@nihr-ccf.org.uk
Website	www.pgfar.nihr.ac.uk

Public Health Research (PHR)

The PHR Programme funds research that evaluates public health interventions, providing new knowledge on the benefits, costs, acceptability and wider impacts of non-NHS interventions intended to improve the health of the public and reduce inequalities in health.

The scope of the PHR Programme is multidisciplinary and broad covering a range of public health interventions. Examples include examining whether regeneration programmes improve public health and reduce health inequalities, evaluating employer schemes to encourage walking or cycling to work and assessing interventions that encourage healthy eating among school children.

Calls/Competitions
Application process
Alerts and contacts
Website

Researcher-led and commissioned calls
Two stage
info@phr.ac.uk
www.phr.nihr.ac.uk



Research for Patient Benefit (RfPB)

The RfPB Programme funds high quality NHS research. The projects funded are regionally derived applied research in health services and social care. The programme's strong regional element is unique within NIHR's research programmes. Applicants need to demonstrate the regional benefits of proposed research although studies with national benefit will also be considered.

The members of the regional committees that assess the applications are drawn from local academic institutions and health organisations. Members of the public and service users from within the region are also appointed to the regional committees.

RfPB does not specify topics for research and encourages proposals for projects covering a wide range of health service issues and challenges. The programme funds a broad range of topics and research methodologies that increase the effectiveness of NHS services, provide value for money and benefit patients. The programme also supports relevant pilot and feasibility studies to help reach the next step of a definitive trial.

All researchers in the NHS in England can apply and joint applications with academic partners are encouraged.

Calls/Competitions
Application process
Alerts
Contact
Website

Researcher-led
One stage
www.nihr.ac.uk
rfpb@nihr-ccf.org.uk
www.rfpb.nihr.ac.uk



Systematic Reviews (SR)

The SR Programme consists of a number of initiatives, including the Cochrane Review Groups and the UK Cochrane Centre, the Centre for Reviews and Dissemination, the Health Technology Assessment Reviews and the Diagnostics Evaluation Unit, which provide high-quality research evidence to support decision-making. Systematic reviews identify, evaluate, combine and summarise the findings of all relevant individual studies, to provide decision makers with the best possible information about the effects of tests, treatments and other interventions used in health and social care.

The SR Programme supports the production and updates of systematic reviews both by core infrastructure funding and open competition via two funding streams:

The **Cochrane Collaboration Programme Grant Scheme** supports high quality systematic reviews that are of direct benefit to users of the NHS in England. This call runs every three years.

Cochrane Incentive Awards are available to Cochrane Review Groups to facilitate, and possibly accelerate, activity that is already planned or under way. This call runs annually.

Calls/Competitions	Researcher-led
Application process	One stage
Alerts and contacts	SRPinfo@southampton.ac.uk
Website	www.netscc.ac.uk/systematic_reviews

Types of studies funded by the NIHR research programmes (see descriptions overleaf)

Key:

Efficacy and Mechanism Evaluation (EME)
 Health Services and Delivery Research (HS&DR)
 Health Technology Assessment (HTA)
 Invention for Innovation (i4i)
 Programme Grants for Applied Research (PGfAR)
 Programme Development Grants (PDG)
 Public Health Research (PHR)
 Research for Patient Benefit (RfPB)
 Systematic Reviews (SR)

Type of study	Research programme								
	EME	HS&DR	HTA	i4i	PGfAR	PDG	PHR	RfPB	SR
Pre-clinical	No	No	No	Yes	No	No	No	No	No
Feasibility	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Pilot	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Phase I	No	Maybe	No	Yes	No	No	No	No	No
Phase II	Yes	Maybe	No	No	No	No	No	Yes	No
Phase III	Yes	Maybe	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No
Phase IV	No	Maybe	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No
Scoping	Yes*	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	No
Diagnostic	Yes	Maybe	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No
Systematic review	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Notes: For details of the kinds of studies the research programmes fund, please consult their websites

*Scoping studies are only fundable as part of a larger fund application. Please contact the EME team for more information at: info@eme.ac.uk

Descriptions of studies

Pre-clinical studies begin before clinical trials can begin and generally take place in the laboratory.

A **feasibility study** is an evaluation of a proposal designed to determine the difficulty in carrying out the full trial.

Pilot studies are small versions of full scale trials.

In **Phase I trials**, researchers test an experimental drug or treatment in a small group of people (20-80) for the first time to evaluate its safety, determine a safe dosage range, and identify side effects.

In **Phase II trials**, the experimental study drug or treatment is given to a larger group of people (100-300) to see if it is effective and to further evaluate its safety.

In **Phase III trials**, the experimental study drug or treatment is given to large groups of people (300-3,000) to confirm its effectiveness, monitor side effects, compare it to commonly used treatments, and collect information that will allow the experimental drug or treatment to be used safely.

In **Phase IV trials**, post marketing studies delineate additional information including the drug's risks, benefits, and optimal use.

A **scoping study** is an order-of-magnitude technical and economic study to determine parameters for future trials.

Diagnostic studies are conducted to find better tests or procedures for diagnosing a particular disease or condition.

A **systematic review** is a literature review focused on a research question that tries to identify, appraise, select and synthesise all high quality research evidence relevant to that question.

Who can apply

Eligibility	Research programme								
	EME	HS&DR	HTA	i4i	PGfAR	PDG	PHR	RfPB	SR
NHS	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes**	Yes	Yes***
Academic	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes*	Yes*	Yes	Yes*	Yes***
Industry	Yes*	Yes	Yes*	Yes	Yes*	Yes*	Yes	Yes*	Yes***
Care provider	Yes*	Yes	Yes*	Yes	Yes*	Yes*	Yes	Yes*	Yes***
Independents	Yes*	Yes	Yes*	Yes	Yes*	Yes*	Yes	Yes*	Yes***
Joint applicants	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes***

Notes: *With NHS as partner **Where in remit ***With a Cochrane Review Group

Calls/Competitions

Number of opportunities to apply per year	Research programme								
	EME	HS&DR	HTA	i4i	PGfAR	PDG	PHR	RfPB	SR
Researcher-led	3	3	3*	2	2	2	3*	3	1*
Commissioned	3	3	3*	1	0	0	3*	0	0
Themed	Frequency and participating programmes as advertised								

Notes: *These may be subject to change

Funding amounts and periods

	Research programme								
	EME	HS&DR	HTA	i4i	PGfAR	PDG	PHR	RfPB	SR
Funding limit*	No limit	No limit	No limit	No limit	£2m**	£100k	No limit	£350k	£400k
Period of funding	No fixed period	No fixed period	No fixed period	Up to 3 years	3-5 years	6-18 months	No fixed period	Up to 3 years	Up to 3 years

Notes: *Applicants must fully justify all costs **Max £400k per year

Training

The NIHR provides training and career development awards, ranging from undergraduate level through to opportunities for established investigators and research leaders. The research must be relevant to the NHS and is expected to produce an outcome that will benefit patients and/or the public within five years of completion.

The Trainees Coordinating Centre (TCC) manages the training and career development programmes. They are aimed at a range of professions and designed to suit different working arrangements and career pathways and can be researcher or institution-led.

Fellowships Programme

The NIHR Fellowships are open to all professions and offer flexibility and continuity between four levels of Fellowship. The awards cover the salary costs, research costs, and training and development costs of the trainee. The following Fellowships are available annually:

- Doctoral Research Fellowship
- Post-Doctoral Fellowship
- Career Development Fellowship
- Senior Research Fellowship

Calls/Competitions	Researcher-led
Application process	Shortlist and interview
Alerts	www.nihr.ac.uk
Contact	nihrfellowshipenquiries@nihrtcc.org.uk
Website	www.nihrtcc.nhs.uk

Integrated Academic Training Programme

Academic Clinical Fellowships (ACF) and Clinical Lectureships (CL) together with In-Practice Fellowship awards (IPF) make up part of a package of schemes, which form the Integrated Academic Training pathway for doctors and dentists.

Integrated Academic Training Programme (cont)

- ACF and CL support doctors and dentists in specialty training to pursue a clinical academic career. Appointments to these posts are made through selected Academic Programmes that have been allocated to University/NHS Trust/Deanery partnerships.
- IPF offer fully qualified General Practitioners (GPs) and General Dental Practitioners (GDPs) the opportunity to pursue an academic qualification and preparation of an application for a Doctoral Fellowship.

The Clinician Scientist (CS) award is a post-doctoral level award, open to researchers working in medicine and dentistry who are capable of leading research in their discipline. The awards last up to five years and cover salary, research, training and development costs.

Calls/Competitions	Institution-led (ACF/CL) or Researcher-led (IPF/CS)
Application process	Apply to institution (ACF/CL) or NIHR (IPF/CS); shortlist and interview
Alerts	www.nihr.ac.uk and IAT partnership websites
Contact	iatenquiries@nihrtcc.org.uk
Website	www.nihrtcc.nhs.uk

Research Methods Programme

The programme supports the development of talented individuals with expertise in statistics, clinical trials, health economics, operational research and modelling through its Research Methods Fellowships and Internships scheme. The Research Methods Opportunity Funding scheme provides funding to academic departments with research expertise to undertake research relevant to the NIHR. Capacity development in research methods is also supported by the NIHR through its funding of Masters Studentships in the Economics of Health and Medical Statistics.

Calls/Competitions	Institution-led
Application process	Apply to institution; shortlist and interview
Alerts	www.nihr.ac.uk and institution websites
Contact	research.methods@nihrtcc.org.uk
Website	www.nihrtcc.nhs.uk

NIHR/CSO Healthcare Scientist (HCS) Research Fellowships and NIHR/CNO Clinical Academic Training (CAT) Pathway for Nurses, Midwives and Allied Health Professions

These programmes are managed by the NIHR in partnership with the Chief Scientific Office (CSO) and the Chief Nursing Office (CNO) respectively. The HCS Programme supports healthcare scientists through doctoral and post-doctoral fellowships, whereas the CAT programme provides a comprehensive clinical academic training pathway for nurses, midwives and allied health professionals working at Masters, doctoral and clinical lectureship levels. The CAT Senior Clinical Lectureship (SCL) scheme is managed by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) and this award is also open to healthcare scientists.

Calls/Competitions	Researcher/institution-led
Application process	Apply to NIHR or institution (Masters), HEFCE (SCL); one stage or shortlist and interview
Alerts	www.nihr.ac.uk and institution websites
Contact HCS	hcs@nihrtcc.org.uk
Contact CAT	cat@nihrtcc.org.uk
Website	www.nihrtcc.nhs.uk

Research Professorships

Research Professorships are appointed through nominations invited from universities and NHS partnerships. They are open to health researchers and methodologists with an outstanding record of clinical and applied health research and its effective translation for improved health. Nominees should have less than five years as a professor, reader, senior lecturer/fellow, clinical scientist or group leader. Each award provides support for salary cost, a post-doctoral appointment, research cost and indirect costs.

Calls/Competitions	Researcher/institution-led
Application process	Shortlist and interview
Alerts	www.nihr.ac.uk
Contact	nihrresearchprofessorships@nihrtcc.org.uk
Website	www.nihrtcc.nhs.uk

Knowledge Mobilisation Fellowships

These Fellowships are open to individuals with significant NHS or academic experience and who can demonstrate that they have the potential to accelerate uptake of research derived knowledge within healthcare settings. The award provides salary, funding for training and development and support for the activities needed to complete an identified knowledge mobilisation project.

Calls/Competitions	Researcher-led
Application process	One stage
Alerts	www.nihr.ac.uk
Contact	nihrfellowshipenquiries@nihrtcc.org.uk
Website	www.nihrtcc.nhs.uk

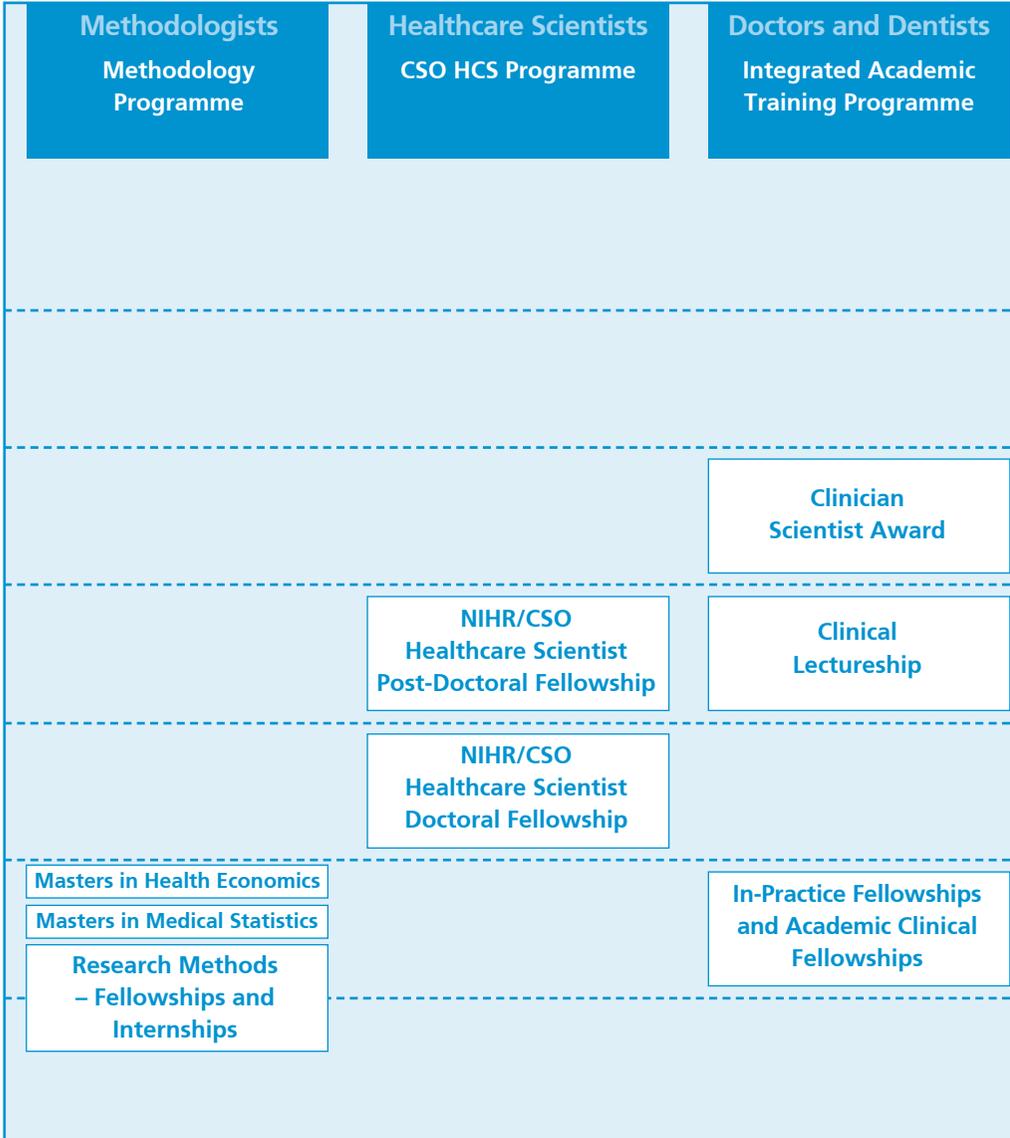
Clinical Trial Fellowships

These Fellowships are designed to support existing NIHR Trainees with an interest in, and experience of, working with clinical trials as part of their current training award who would benefit from further training within the setting of a Clinical Trials Unit (CTU) in receipt of NIHR CTU Support Funding.

Calls/Competitions	Institution-led
Application process	One stage
Alerts	www.nihr.ac.uk
Contact	clinicaltrials@nihrtcc.org.uk
Website	www.nihrtcc.nhs.uk



Research career pathway chart



All Professionals Fellowships and Professorships	Nurses, Midwives, Allied Health Professionals Clinical Academic Training	Level of Award
Research Professorships		Chair
Senior Research Fellowship		Senior/Pre-Chair
Career Development Fellowship	NIHR/CNO Clinical Lectureships	Senior Post-Doctoral
Post-Doctoral Fellowship		Early Post-Doctoral
Doctoral Research Fellowship	NIHR/CNO Clinical Doctoral Research Fellowships	Doctoral
	NIHR/CNO Masters in Clinical Research	Pre-Doctoral/Masters
		Undergraduate

Research Design Service (RDS)

The NIHR provides advice and support to researchers through a regionally-based Research Design Service (RDS) covering ten geographical areas of England. The RDS employ skilled methodologists based in universities and the NHS who are able to advise and provide practical support for teams developing research proposals for submission to national, open, peer-reviewed funding competitions for applied health or social care research.

This help and support is available free of charge to NHS researchers and others working in partnership with the NHS. Priority is given to researchers applying to NIHR funding schemes. Advice and support is provided face-to-face and by email. You may be advised to involve other collaborators, for example, patients, other clinicians or methodologists with specific relevant expertise.

Regional contacts See list opposite
Website www.rds.nihr.ac.uk

Patient and Public Involvement (PPI)

The NIHR is committed to active public involvement to enhance the quality, relevance and acceptability of the research it funds. All research applicants are asked to describe how they have involved patients and the public in developing their research proposal as well as plans for involvement in the research study.

Through the INVOLVE Programme the NIHR offers information and guidance on public involvement in research. The INVOLVE website has a range of publications and resources on how to involve members of the public in research and the difference it can make. The RDS can also advise on PPI.

Email admin@invo.org.uk
Telephone 023 8065 1088
Website www.invo.org.uk

Need help with your application?

Contact your nearest Research Design Service (RDS).

East of England RDS

Email rds@essex.ac.uk
Telephone 01206 874856
Website www.rds-eoe.nihr.ac.uk

East Midlands RDS

Leicestershire, Northamptonshire & Rutland
Email enquiries-NDL@rds-eastmidlands.org.uk
Telephone 0116 252 3276
Website www.rds-eastmidlands.org.uk

Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire & Lincolnshire

Email enquiries-NDL@rds-eastmidlands.org.uk
Telephone 0115 9249924 ext. 70715
Website www.rds-eastmidlands.org.uk

London RDS

Email peter.lovell@kcl.ac.uk
Telephone 020 7848 6632
Website www.rdslondon.co.uk

North East RDS

Newcastle
Email rds@ncl.ac.uk
Telephone 0191 222 7647
Website www.rds-ne.nihr.ac.uk

Durham

Email rds@durham.ac.uk
Telephone 0191 334 0826
Website www.rds-ne.nihr.ac.uk

North West RDS

Email rds-nw@lancaster.ac.uk
Telephone 0152 459 3209
Website www.rds-nw.nihr.ac.uk

South Central RDS

Email rds-sc@soton.ac.uk
Telephone 0238 079 4778
Website www.rds-sc.nihr.ac.uk

South East RDS

Email d.moore@brighton.ac.uk
Telephone 0127 364 3952
Website www.rds-se.nihr.ac.uk

South West RDS

Email rds-sw@tst.nhs.uk
Telephone 0182 334 2792
Website www.rds-sw.nihr.ac.uk

West Midlands RDS

Email rds@contacts.bham.ac.uk
Telephone 0121 414 5390
Website www.rds-wm.nihr.ac.uk

Yorkshire & Humber RDS

Email rds-yh@sheffield.ac.uk
Telephone 0114 222 0828
Website www.rds-yh.nihr.ac.uk

Contacts

National Institute for Health Research

Email enquiries@nihr.ac.uk

Website www.nihr.ac.uk

Coordinating Centres

Central Commissioning Facility

Email info@nihr-ccf.org.uk

Telephone 020 8843 8000

Website www.ccf.nihr.ac.uk

Evaluation, Trials and Studies Coordinating Centre

Email info@netscc.ac.uk

Telephone 023 8059 5586

Website www.netscc.ac.uk

Trainees Coordinating Centre

Email nihrtcc@nihrtcc.org.uk

Telephone 0113 346 6260

Website www.nihrtcc.nhs.uk

The information in this leaflet is correct at the time of printing.
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