

Dear all

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**Keep up-to-date with COVID-19 funding calls and resources**



Our friends at RDS London have put together a really useful webpage, which is updated frequently with the latest funding calls and resources for researchers looking at COVID-19.

**Visit the website [here](#).**

**RDS WM post award support-we are here to help**

If you are conducting a research project for which you received funding from an open, national, peer-reviewed funding scheme and are currently experiencing problems - e.g. due to COVID 19 and the impact lockdown has had on many studies - the RDS can assist you with problems you may be having relating to issues of research design. We can provide assistance whether or not you had RDS support when submitting your study for funding. Do feel free to contact us, either to your local hub or by sending a general support request via our [website](#)

Please note, however, that if you need advice that is *not* to do with research design – e.g. relating to research governance, funding, and logistical issues – this is probably best sought elsewhere, e.g. a Research and Development Department in your organization or the [NIHR Clinical Research Network](#) (CRN).

**Latest RDS Blog: Using health and social care data for research**

Routinely collected data contains large quantities of health and social care information, covering whole populations and spanning long time periods. Such data can be repurposed and underpin new research, reducing costs, time and resources.



**Read the blog [here](#).**

## Changes to NIHR application forms

### NIHR PGfAR Programme: Changes to Stage 1 application form and guidance notes

NIHR have made some changes to the application form and guidance notes for the PGfAR Programme.

Recent changes to NIHR Stage 1 application form and guidance notes (as at August 2020). As part of NIHR response to the Government's call for **further reduction in bureaucracy** the Stage1 application has been reduced in scope. The changes include:

- Section 2: the lead applicant's research background and details of the history of the application are no longer required at this stage.
- Section 3: less information is requested at this stage about the joint lead applicant.
- Section 5: the 'Research plan' has been limited to 3000 words, that is 3-4 pages
- Section 10 and specifically the pre-submission checklist for applicants has been removed.

### NIHR Academy Fellowships: Now a one-stage application process

NIHR Academy Fellowships, which were previously two stages, have now been changed to a single stage application. For applicants this will mean that the PPI and detailed budget section, which is normally not needed until just before the interviews, will be required when the application form is submitted. Nothing else other than wording will change in the application.

## Latest NIHR funding calls

### NIHR HS&DR Programme: Health and social care workforce

**Details:** The Health Services and Delivery Research (HS&DR) Programme aims to produce rigorous and relevant evidence to improve the quality, accessibility and organisation of health and social care services.

The HS&DR Programme are accepting stage 1 applications to this highlight notice via their researcher-led workstream. HS&DR is interested in receiving applications for research in the following areas; identifying and evaluating interventions to support the health and social care workforce to develop inclusive leadership practices and embed learning and development needed to deliver transformational changes across the health and social care sector; identifying optimal approaches to skill mix and flexible working; supporting well-being of staff.

**Deadline for proposals:** 4th February 2021

**Find out more** [here](#)

### **NIHR Artificial Intelligence Health and Care Award**

**Details:** The Artificial Intelligence Health and Care Award supports innovators and technologies across the spectrum of development of artificial intelligence (AI) technology, from concept through to initial NHS adoption and testing of the technology within clinical pathways.

- Phase 1 - Feasibility
- Phase 2 - Development & Clinical Evaluation
- Phase 3 - Real World Testing
- Phase 4 - Initial Health System Adoption

The AI Award will deploy £140m to accelerate the testing and evaluation of the most promising AI technologies that meet the strategic aims set out in NHS Long Term Plan. The AI Award will support technologies across the spectrum of development, from initial feasibility to evaluation within clinical pathways in the NHS and social care settings, to the point that they could be nationally commissioned.

**Deadline for proposals:** 8th December 2020

**Find out more** [here](#)

### **NIHR Invention for Innovation - Challenge Awards**

**Details:** The NIHR Invention for Innovation (i4i) Programme supports the preclinical and clinical development of medical technologies in areas of existing or emerging patient need. The i4i programme invites proposals to Call 11 of its researcher-led Challenge Awards, which this year are on the topic of Real World Implementation (RWI).

The RWI Challenge Award will fund investigations of medtech innovations in healthcare settings. The aim is to shorten the evidence gap between the safety/efficacy typical of a newly or nearly CE marked technology and what is required for decisions by commissioners and regulators. At the same time, this will de-risk the product for follow-on investment.

In this competition, we are partnering with ESPRC, Asthma UK and the British Lung Foundation to highlight our support for the development and adoption of asthma health technologies.

**Deadline for proposals:** 12th January 2021

**Find out more** [here](#)

### **Future Focused Leadership Programme Cohort 3 - Leaders stream**

**Details:** The Future Focused Leadership Programme (FFLP) is a 12-month programme designed to enhance skills in leading across organisational boundaries, leading strategy and change and influencing others to achieve the strategic aims of NIHR.

The programme has been developed specifically for the NIHR and is based around research on what makes a successful leader, offering participants the opportunity to explore new thinking on how to lead in the 21st century. The programme is designed around exploring Leading Yourself, Leading Others and Leading Beyond Authority.

The programme will enable participants to develop their capabilities and effectiveness as a leader by identifying and reflecting on their strengths and areas for development.

The programme incorporates a range of development opportunities including: residential workshops, 360 feedback activity, action learning sets, individual coaching and virtual reality coaching. For cohort 3 there have been some adaptations made in light of COVID-19, including the first two residentials of the programme being converted to virtual experiences delivered across two days of online sessions.

**Deadline for proposals:** 7th January 2021

**Find out more** [here](#)

**RDS West Midlands** can offer free expert support and advice on all aspects of designing and developing applications for NIHR funding and other peer reviewed funding bodies– please complete our online Request for Support form to gain access to our advice.

### **NIHR Funding deadlines calendar**

For an overview of the year's NIHR calls and ongoing opportunities, please view the online calendar: <https://www.nihr.ac.uk/researchers/funding-opportunities/>

### **Funding calls from other bodies**

#### **MRC Joint Global Health Trials**

**Details:** This scheme seeks to support research that addresses the health problems affecting low and middle income countries (LMICs) by funding definitive trials that are likely to produce implementable and generalisable results to change policy and practice.

The purpose of this scheme is to provide funding for the best proposals to generate new knowledge about interventions that will contribute to the improvement of health in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs). The scheme is focused on late-stage clinical and health intervention trials evaluating efficacy and effectiveness. The scheme remains primarily a mechanism to support definitive trials. The aims of a trial development grant must be to address questions which need to be answered before a credible, competitive, definitive trial can be designed.

**Deadline for proposals:** 4th February 2021

**Find out more** [here](#)

#### **British Skin Foundation - Research Award**

**Details:** There are one million people in the UK who suffer from psoriasis. At least 100,000 new cases of skin cancer are reported each year. 20% of all children have eczema. The number of people suffering from skin disease grows each day. The dermatological community acknowledges the significance of these figures and the urgent need to stem the growth of skin disease in the UK. The British Skin Foundation plays a vital role in addressing this issue by funding the work aimed at finding better treatments for all conditions.

A BSF Research Award is available to anybody wishing to carry out U.K or R.O.I based research into skin disease.

**Deadline for proposals:** 5th March 2021

**Find out more** [here](#)

### **Paget's Association – Research Grants**

**Details:** The Paget's Association is a national UK charity providing information and support to all those affected by Paget's Disease of Bone. The Association funds quality research, raises awareness and supports professionals to achieve excellence in care and research.

The Paget's Association invites applications for Research Project Grants in all areas of Paget's disease of bone. Collaborative research is strongly encouraged including through our Paget's Association Centres of Excellence (PACEs).

**Deadline for proposals:** 18th January 2021

**Find out more** [here](#)

### **Wellcome Trust – Joint Health Systems Research Initiative**

**Details:** This scheme supports research based in low- and middle-income countries to improve health systems in those locations. The scheme is jointly supported by the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO), the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC), the Medical Research Council (MRC) and the Wellcome Trust.

Health systems in low- and middle-income countries face the challenges of substantial socioeconomic and health inequalities, rapid globalisation and evolving disease burdens. We need a robust evidence base to strengthen health systems and improve the delivery of healthcare.

Our reviewers are looking for proposals that will generate evidence on how to strengthen and improve health systems in low- and middle-income countries. Research findings should inform the delivery of evidence-based interventions or structural changes that are of direct relevance to decision makers.

**Deadline for proposals:** 19th January 2021

**Find out more** [here](#)

### **Versus Arthritis - Accelerating New Treatments**

**Details:** The UK Musculoskeletal Translational Research Collaboration (MSK TRC) is a partnership between Versus Arthritis and the National Institute for Health Research. The partnership aims for the globally recognised centres of the UK to be at the forefront of musculoskeletal experimental medicine. The collaboration draws on the rich discovery, clinical and translational research landscape of the UK to accelerate new treatments and deliver cutting edge improvements for patients. The new collaboration operates an expansive, flexible, inclusive model. This builds on our previous investment in Experimental Arthritis and Osteoarthritis Treatment Centres and NIHR Biomedical Research Centres, welcoming and encompassing wider hubs and collaborators.

To bring momentum to the area, we will fund mechanistic experimental/translational medicine studies in humans across the areas of prevention, diagnosis or treatment that are aimed at priming the next transitional step.

Applications should be focused on an unmet arthritis need, within or across the collaboration's themes. Studies that tackle related COVID-19 questions are also encouraged.

**Deadline for proposals:** 18th January 2021

**Find out more** [here](#)

### **British Infection Association – Project Grants**

**Details:** The BIA aims to foster excellence in all aspects of clinical infection-related research by supporting patient-facing researchers-in-training to achieve high-quality clinical and basic research in the field of infection.

BIA Project Grants provide consumables costs for trainees undertaking an infection-related research project in an academic centre in the UK or Ireland. It is envisaged funds would be used to support preliminary study in a field with intention of developing

**Deadline for proposals:** 31st January 2021

**Find out more** [here](#)

### **Kidney Research UK – Stoneygate Research Awards**

**Details:** Kidney Research UK is the largest charity dedicated to kidney research in the UK. In line with Kidney Research UK and the Stonygate Trust's shared strategic interest in improving the lives of people with kidney disease, Kidney Research UK is pleased to invite expressions of interest for research proposals that match the theme of transforming treatments.

Transforming treatments is a key research priority for Kidney Research UK and the Stonygate Trust. They are committed to find new ways to:

- make dialysis more tolerable and effective
- extend the life of a transplant and make it easier to live with
- make monitoring less invasive and kinder, and less dependent on hospital visits
- develop and expand the use of medical technology to achieve earlier diagnosis and better patient management.

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**Deadline for expression of interest:** 13th November 2020

**Find out more** [here](#)

### **Latest Fellowships**

#### **Pancreatic Cancer UK – Clinical Research Fellowships**

**Details:** Pancreatic Cancer UK joint fund CRTFs in pancreatic cancer with the MRC. These Fellowships provide up to three years' support for clinically qualified, active professionals to undertake specialised or further research training within the UK. The CRTFs provide a competitive personal salary up to but not including NHS consultant level, and funding of up to £20,000 per year. This may cover consumables, equipment, conference travel, PhD and other course fees.

**Deadline for proposals:** 7th January 2021

**Find out more** [here](#)

#### **Dunhill Medical Trust and RNID – Co-funded Post-Doctoral Fellowships**

**Details:** RNID and The Dunhill Medical Trust are pleased to announce a second round of two 2-year Post-doctoral Fellowships.

Applications are invited in any of the following areas:

- Research to underpin the development of treatments for hearing disorders, including tinnitus.

- Research to improve how new treatments for hearing disorders, including tinnitus, are developed and tested.

Applications with a focus on understanding the mechanisms of age-related hearing conditions, or how ageing affects the auditory system, are especially encouraged, and will be considered for joint funding. Projects should bring tangible benefits closer for people who are deaf, have tinnitus or hearing loss.

**Deadline for proposals:** 12th January 2021

**Find out more [here](#)**

## News

### **NIHR guidance for 'second wave' COVID-19 activity**

The NIHR has issued guidance to protect both COVID-19 and non-COVID-19 research during a 'second wave' of high COVID-19 activity. The guidance states that research staff funded by NIHR should not be deployed to front line duties except in exceptional circumstances.

**Find out more [here](#)**

### **ABPI report - Clinical trials: How the UK can transform the clinical research environment**

The ABPI has published its second annual report on the state of clinical trials in the UK, showing that the UK has been leading the rest of Europe in early-stage clinical research. The report is based on pre-COVID data, but it makes a case for transforming the clinical research environment during COVID19 and post EU transition. The pre-COVID-19 data (from 2018) articulates the UK's performance across phases (I, II and III) and disease areas (Oncology, Nervous System, Cardio-metabolic, Immunology and Infectious diseases).

**Find out more [here](#)**

## Blogs and Articles

### **NIHR blog: Taking a non-traditional route into social care research**

RDS SE Social Care Research Adviser Stacey Rand is based at the Personal Social Services Research Unit at the University of Kent. Here she talks about her route into the field and how NIHR's Research for Social Care call has supported her work.

**Find out more [here](#)**

### **NIHR blog: Assessing the health research grant application process**

Ben Morgan is Assistant Director for the NIHR Research for Patient Benefit (RfPB) programme and NIHR Research Schools Research Programmes. He writes about assessing health research grant applications and whether the processes being used currently will lead to funding the best research.

**Find out more [here](#)**

### **HRA blog – What's next for health research?**

Dr Janet Messer, Director of Approvals Operation at the HRA, looks at the effect COVID-19 has had on the research landscape, as well as the importance of planning how other clinical research activity can move forward.

**Find out more [here](#)**

### **The Health Foundation blog – Using research to prepare for a post-pandemic world**

Usha Boolaky and Shaun Leamon from the Health Foundation's research team explain how the long-term research agenda needs to incorporate important questions about COVID-19 and the pandemic's continuing impact on our lives.

**Find out more [here](#)**

## **Training and events**

### **Support available from Clinical Research Network West Midlands**

Support and advice is available from the CRN WM Study Support Service Team for any study that is potentially eligible or applying for CRN Support. This includes providing cost attribution advice to support researchers in completing their grant applications and authorising the Schedule of Events Cost Attribution Tool (SoECAT), navigating the approvals process, accessing training provided by the Network, identifying and supporting the management of excess treatment costs, and can highlight further support within the Network to support study set up and delivery to time and target. Once open to recruitment, we will stay in contact and continue to support optimisation of recruitment to your study. Please note that prioritisation of support will be for nationally prioritised COVID-19 Urgent Public Health Research studies.

**For more information please contact: [studysupport.crnwestmidlands@nihr.ac.uk](mailto:studysupport.crnwestmidlands@nihr.ac.uk).**

**Website:** <http://www.nihr.ac.uk/nihr-in-your-area/west-midlands/>

### **Applying for NIHR funding? Access free advice and support from the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) Research Design Service West Midlands**

Our multi-disciplinary team can offer advice on the key ingredients in a successful health or social care research proposal, including:

- Statistics and health economics
- Qualitative methodology
- Support on involving patients and public in research, identified by the NIHR as a critical component in funding applications
- Peer review of draft grant applications before submission.

**Find out more** about how RDS West Midlands could help you and your team at <http://www.rds-wm.nihr.ac.uk/>

**\*We have sent you this email because we believe it may be of interest to you, if you do not wish to receive future emails from us please email me by return at [k.biddle@bham.ac.uk](mailto:k.biddle@bham.ac.uk) and I will remove you from my contact list.**

