

**NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR HEALTH RESEARCH
SCHOOL FOR SOCIAL CARE RESEARCH**

**Call for Proposals
Building Research Capacity in Adult Social Care**

April 2016

The NIHR School for Social Care Research (NIHR SSCR) invites full proposals to *support the development of research capacity in adult social care in England*. NIHR SSCR is seeking to support individuals committed to adult social care research who would benefit from NIHR SSCR support to develop their research careers in this field, ideally utilising NIHR SSCR funding to develop proposals for large fellowships or research proposals to NIHR or other funders.

1. Background

Launched in May 2009, NIHR SSCR was funded by the National Institute for Health Research¹ for an initial five years (Phase I) and has been re-commissioned for a further 5 years (Phase II). NIHR SSCR aims to develop the evidence base for adult social care practice in England by commissioning and conducting world-class research.

Directed by Professor Martin Knapp at LSE, NIHR SSCR is a partnership between the London School of Economics and Political Science, and the Universities of Bristol, Kent, Manchester and York.

NIHR SSCR has a portfolio of research studies, and numerous methods and scoping review papers, commissioned since 2009 which may be helpful resources for applicants. Further information about SSCR can be viewed at www.sscr.nihr.ac.uk.

2. Rationale

NIHR SSCR wishes to support individuals who seek to establish themselves as independent researchers in adult social care and who have a commitment to and passion for developing the evidence base to improve practice in this sector in England.

We use a broad and inclusive description of adult social care, encompassing the wide range of care and support that is available to and used by adults; the diversity of services and service providers of adult social care; and care and support provided through and with unpaid care, communities, self-care and self-funded care. We are interested in all aspects of this plurality of care and support arrangements, and how they are developing in the current context of social care

¹ The National Institute for Health Research provides the framework through which the research staff and research infrastructure of the NHS in England is positioned, maintained and managed as a national research facility. The NIHR provides the NHS with the support and infrastructure it needs to conduct first-class research funded by the Government and its partners alongside high-quality patient care, education and training. Its aim is to support outstanding individuals (both leaders and collaborators), working in world class facilities (both NHS and university), and conducting leading edge research focused on the needs of patients. <http://www.nihr.ac.uk/>

(and other relevant sectors) in England. Areas of overlap and/or integration with other sectors are also of interest to our remit.

3. The requirement

Applicants to this call will need to make a strong case to the commissioning panel for themselves, the proposed plan of work, the institutional support they will receive, the training they will undertake as part of their workplan, and how this package will help them take the next steps in their research career towards becoming an independent researcher in adult social care.

We are not concerned with commissioning projects on specified areas of adult social care in this call. We leave it with applicants to define the areas of social care they are interested in and what are the pertinent areas of need and questions.

Candidates can be at any stage of their research career, i.e. pre-doctoral, doctoral, post-doctoral, but not yet experienced enough to be established as independent, or more established researchers. Applicants must show a commitment to establishing a long-term career in adult social care research.

We have no specific format for how the support offered in this research capacity development call will be used by applicants. Examples may be:

- i. Support to have dedicated time to focus on a research project application to the NIHR, MRC, ESRC, Wellcome Trust or other significant funder of research.
- ii. Preparatory research or personal developmental that will lay solid foundations for a more substantial programme of research and significant research grant applications to, for example. NIHR, the Wellcome Trust, or a research council.
- iii. Support for a candidate to make a transition from a practitioner career to be more active as a researcher in adult social care.
- iv. Support for a researcher experienced in one area outside adult social care to transition to become established in adult social care research.

We would expect successful candidates to participate in the life of the NIHR SSCR, including attending its annual conference in April and participating in bespoke training meetings. Each successful applicant will be supported by a senior member of NIHR SSCR. We would also like the successful candidates to contribute to wider activities to develop a research minded culture in adult social care in England.

4. Timing

It is expected that proposals will start within 3 months of confirmation of an award, and will be completed within 8 months of the start date.

5. Selection criteria

Proposals will be assessed by the commissioning panel against the following criteria:

- Supporting the applicant to *move towards being an independent researcher in adult social care*.

- Strong individual applicants.
- A commitment to enhancing the evidence base for improving adult social care practice.
- A plan of work with a clear focus, and aims and objectives in the timescale of NIHR SSCR support.
- A robust plan to achieve the stated aims and objectives.
- Excellent organisational support likely to help deliver the proposed plan of work and help the applicant beyond that to become strong researchers in adult social care.

6. Funding available

NIHR SSCR will make individual awards of up to £20,000 in this call.

It is for the applicant and relevant host institution to determine whether to apply overheads. NIHR SSCR will only make available up to 25% of staff costs as overheads within the maximum budget of £20,000.

7. Commissioning process

The application process is in one stage and full proposals are invited on the application form for this call.

All queries about this call should be sent to Michael Clark (M.C.Clark@lse.ac.uk) or, for funding and/or contracts issues, to Anji Mehta (A.Mehta3@lse.ac.uk).

All proposals submitted by the deadline for this call will be considered by NIHR SSCR's Selection Panel and shortlisted applicants will be invited to an interview in **early summer 2016**.

Applicants will be informed of the Panel's decision in **June 2016**.

8. Contractual arrangements

For successful applicants NIHR SSCR wishes to sign and exchange contracts by **the end of June 2016** with successful projects to start as per agreed in the contract. The exact project start date is a matter for negotiation between NIHR SSCR and the successful applicant. Contracts will be between the London School of Economics and Political Science on behalf of NIHR SSCR and the successful applicant's organisation.

9. Application process

Applications should be submitted to NIHR SSCR via email to sscr@lse.ac.uk by 4pm on **Monday 9 May 2016**.