

NIHR SCHOOL FOR SOCIAL CARE RESEARCH

Internal Core Member Research Proposals

Guidance Notes

This document provides guidance to applicants wishing to be considered for the NIHR School for Social Care Research's Core Member (Internal) Research Funding.

The School commissions high-quality studies with the potential to influence and improve practice and outcomes in adult social care in England. We use a broad and inclusive description of adult social care:

“The term ‘adult social care’ refers to provision of personal and practical care and support that people may need because of their age, illness, cognition, disability or other circumstances. It also includes support for family members or other unpaid carers. Important aims are to help people remain independent, retain their dignity and achieve a better quality of life. Another important aim is to safeguard vulnerable individuals from abuse and neglect. Care and support are provided in a number of settings: in residential and nursing homes, in people’s own homes (domiciliary or ‘home’ care) and in other community settings such as day centres. There are also various accommodation settings, such as sheltered housing, extra-care housing, supported living and Shared Lives schemes. Social workers and other staff carry out assessments, provide information and coordinate activities to back up this service provision.”

We are interested in all aspects of this plurality of care and support arrangements and how they are changing in adult social care in England.

Proposals from Core Members should address one or more key themes relevant to our remit. These include (in no priority order):

1. Adult social care needs (met and unmet), and/or prevention of need.
2. Evaluating approaches to, or models of, adult social care and social work practice; development and/or evaluation of new approaches to care; user-led, carer-led and other innovations in organising care, potentially including digital or other new technologies.
3. The adult social care workforce e.g. role development, retention of workforce, or requirements for service models.
4. Care systems and resources e.g. care markets, funding models and eligibility as they apply to practice.
5. Working with communities and other assets.
6. Legislation as it applies to practice.
7. Diversity, inequality and 'marginalised' communities.
8. Adult social care at the interface with other systems.

The School is committed to commissioning research across the full spectrum of adult social care practice (user groups, carers, workforce, and settings).

1. Application guidance

Applicants should complete the Outline Proposal Form and submit this at <https://www.sscr.nihr.ac.uk/internal-proposals/>.

Please note that where signatures are needed a scanned copy of the relevant page of the form or electronically signed version should be submitted.

There are no deadlines for the outline proposal but applicants should allow for at least three weeks for their outline proposals to be reviewed by the School and allow themselves sufficient time to subsequently complete a full proposal ahead of the School's full proposal deadlines. Any full proposals received after a deadline will be processed with full proposals received for the subsequent deadline.

Queries specific to scope and content of the proposed research should be addressed to Dr Michael Clark, Research Programme Manager, M.C.Clark@lse.ac.uk.

Queries specific to finance or contractual matters should be addressed to Anji Mehta, Finance and Impact Manager, a.mehta3@lse.ac.uk

2. General guidance

The form should be completed using Arial font size 12. No adjustments should be made to the margins of the form.

PART 1

Section 1: Summary of application and applicant details

Summary of application

Please provide details as requested. The summary should state the relevant theme (see above).

Lead applicant details

Please provide details as requested. This individual will be the contact person for all queries relating to the proposal and subsequently the project itself if funding is awarded.

Plain English summary

Please provide an accessible lay summary of your proposed research study. This should be no more than 500 words and in plain English. This should be a clear summary of the entire research project (what it sets out to research, why, and how it will be done), that avoids jargon and is easily understandable by a non-specialist reader. The summary should also outline the relevance to adult social care practice in England and expectations for contributing to improving it.

The summary should be in line with guidance from INVOLVE on Plain English Summaries¹.

Co-applicant details

Please provide details for each co-applicant(s) as requested. Please copy and insert additional sections for co-applicants as needed.

Division of responsibilities for each individual involved in the research project

Please state the responsibilities that each individual will have in relation to the project, if funded, and their expected percentage of full-time equivalent time allocation to it.

Section 2: Description of proposed research

This section should not exceed 4 pages (excluding references section) once completed.

Plan of the proposed research

The summary should encompass the following:

Background: Please explain the context to the research focus/question you have chosen and why it is important. Provide a *brief* overview of the known literature, including, if appropriate, reference to your previous work. Please outline your understanding of how this project builds on and adds to the existing evidence base and demonstrate any relevant links to practice and policy developments and outcomes for adult social care in England. Applicants should specify how the proposal addresses an identified evidence gap. Applicants should set out how the proposed study complements or adds to previous research, whether funded by NIHR or any other source.

Research questions/aims and objectives: Please indicate the main questions/aims of the project, how the project will address the specific research themes/questions chosen, making clear how the aims of the research project fit with the aims of the NIHR SSCR.

Design, methods and data collection and analysis: Please provide a clear justification and description of the overall methodological approach. Applicants should provide a justification for sampling, data collection and analysis addressing any anticipated challenges/risks for the design and the proposed solutions. This section should also contain description of key ethical considerations and requirements for related approvals.

Applicants should be aware that the School requires all applicants to demonstrate they have fully considered potential data management and archiving possibilities in the Stage 2, full application. The School is committed to making data as openly available as possible, and for data to be re-used and archived wherever that is appropriate.

Timeline for the project: Please include a timeline for the project. You can submit a separate Gantt chart. All projects must be completed by 31 December 2023 (Phase III of the School runs to 30 April 2024). Applicants may wish to consider time required for

¹ <http://www.invo.org.uk/makeitclear/>.

unforeseen delay and impact and dissemination work when thinking about completion dates.

User, carer, practitioner involvement

Please provide details of user, carer, and practitioner *involvement in the planning of the study to date including in the writing of the proposal as well as future plans to involve users, carers, and practitioners in conducting the study*. You should also consider how such involvement can help improve the relevance of the proposal and assist in achieving impact from the work, stating, as relevant, how users, carers and/or practitioners are likely to play a role in the pathway to impact for your proposed study. If no involvement is planned, please explain why and provide justification.

Pathways to impact plan and knowledge exchange activities

NIHR SSCR considers knowledge exchange to be an activity which continues throughout each study and an integral part of the research process. NIHR SSCR welcomes use of innovative methods or traditional methods of knowledge exchange and dissemination.

Applicants are required to provide an overview of proposed knowledge exchange activities in this Stage 1, outline application.

The School requires all applicants to thoroughly plan knowledge exchange activities relevant to the proposed study, their timing in the study and the resources required, how these will lead to impact from the proposed study, and any intellectual property they anticipate being developed. This detail will be required if selected for a full application.

Minimum requirements: As a minimum, the NIHR SSCR contract will require all funded studies to provide an end-of-project report comprising:

- a short academic and administrative report;
- one or more peer-reviewed paper(s) submitted to high quality journals (in pre-submission manuscript form) that communicate the main findings of the project; and
- a brief, accessible 'Findings' document to be placed on the School website, indicating key messages from the project. This is the School's main output from projects and is aimed at a variety of audiences, especially those who can help make an impact on improving practice.

In addition, research teams are required to ensure at least three presentations are given, one of which is likely to be to a relevant social care provider/agency, and one as part of an NIHR SSCR-organised event (annual conference or seminar).

Open access: NIHR SSCR complies with NIHR's Policy on Open Access² and requires the main findings from each study to be published through the Gold Open Access route. Applicants are advised to familiarise themselves with this Policy in drawing up their knowledge exchange plans and ensure adequate funding has been budgeted.

² http://www.nihr.ac.uk/research/Pages/Research_Open_Access_Policy_Statement.aspx

References

Please provide references to any literature, research papers, policy papers and/or publications that are cited in - and relevant to - your proposal. This section is not part of the 4-page limit.

Section 3: Summary of resources

Total funding requested

Applicants should note the following when calculating the total funding for the proposed project. It is expected that there may be some variation between outline and full proposal budgeting, but this is expected to be less than 10%.

Costs should include any applicable salary increment awards and inflation.

NIHR SSCR does not provide full economic costs. Universities, HEIs and others can request up to 25% of total salary costs in overheads as long as these are fully justified at Stage 2 (full application). The School will provide resources for items traditionally associated with full economic cost charges where these are relevant to the proposed project and are fully justified (such as administrative support time, equipment, some consumables (telephone calls, printing), staff training).

Awards made by the School are presently outside the scope of UK VAT. Should this situation change during the course of the call or during the course of funded projects arising from it, this will be dealt with by an amendment to the award contract.

The total requested should be appropriate to the research design and reflect *good value for money*.

Resources should include all relevant costs, including payments or salaries for those involved in the project from non-academic settings (such as local authorities involved in providing data for a study). NIHR SSCR will pay justifiable costs to ensure that projects are as inclusive as possible. Please note that we expect studies to make full use of the support from local Clinical Research Networks where appropriate.

Applicants should describe any financial contributions to be made through host institutions, project partners or other to support the research for which no cost reimbursement is sought.

PART 2

Declaration

The lead applicant should ensure they discuss their proposal with the Core Member NIHR SSCR lead at their institution - please note without this confirmation no outline proposal will be considered for funding.