

## NHSE – NIHR ARC Wessex Researcher Enhancement Award 2024

### Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

*The Researcher Enhancement (RE) awards are intended to support individuals working within health or care organisations with the aim of helping them make the step change from doctoral research towards becoming independent early career academics by supporting them to apply for an NIHR Clinical Lecturer fellowship or the NIHR Advanced fellowship (dependent on experience to date) or equivalent career development awards*

**1. Who should apply for the RE Awards?**

All health or social care practitioners and applied health researchers, working in the healthcare sector or a local authority in Wessex. Including, but not limited to social care practitioners, nurses, midwives, pharmacists and allied health professionals. Those who have recently completed (usually within the last four years), or soon to be awarded a PhD, but haven't yet established themselves as an independent researcher. Applicants must have been awarded their PhD by the time they start their RE award.

**2. How long after completing my PhD can I apply for the RE Award?**

You can apply up to 48 months after completing your PhD.

**3. Do I need to be a registered clinician?**

Applicants must be currently employed in either a full time or part time with a health care / social care organisation or voluntary care sector organisation but there is no requirement for you to be employed as a clinician.

**4. Do I need to be employed within Wessex?**

Yes, you should be employed in the Wessex region.

**5. Do I have to have set project in mind?**

We really do want applicants to progress their ideas for their applied health and social care research further. What we are looking for is that you further develop your PhD work, collaborations and networks. We are looking to fund individuals whose research is applied and aligned within one of our themes for which we are funded. A key aspect we are looking for is that all applicants have the support of a project lead who is currently working with one of the four ARC Wessex themes and how you will work with them. Through the [themes](#) you should be able to see the various projects underway, publications and project leads.

**6. How many hours would I be expected to commit to?**

A reasonable commitment is that you are released from your clinical and care duties to focus on your research for a minimum of one day per week over six months.

**7. I work part-time, rather than backfill my currently hours can I apply for this to fund additional hours?**

Yes, as long as we have confirmed support with your line manager that they will increase your contracted hours to match the additional funding.

- 8. Does the named research supervisor need to be attached to a university?**  
Yes. Potential supervisors can be found/contactable through our ARC Wessex. It might also be worth that you attempt to discuss the research with one of the ARC theme leads / theme project leads too to see where the research aligns with our aims and scope. It is highly recommended to have at least two named supervisors/mentors including a clinical mentor if you are a clinician.
- 9. How much funding can I apply for?**  
The maximum amount to apply for under the Research Enhancement Award is £20,000. Co-funding from partner organisations is desirable but not essential.
- 10. How do I calculate costs for my Research Supervisor, can I also request funding for estates/indirect costs as well as staff time?**  
We are offering a fixed fees of £500 per supervisor(s) in recognition of their time and support up to a maximum of two supervisors. In your application under the section that requests details of your supervisor(s) please indicate how and when you will meet with them. For example, 1 hour per week face to face / virtually and / or email discussion as required.
- 11. Is there any obligation to attend external events / training? Or would it be as a self-contained project with support from my nominated supervisor?**  
Most of the funding goes towards your salary backfill to do this. You can also request funding for training courses that will support you in the development of your research ideas towards further funding applications. You develop your training plan to fit these needs. We are especially seeking to support applicants who wish to develop applications for NIHR clinical academic post-doctoral fellowships.
- 12. What needs to be included in the detailed justified spending plan for the award period?**  
A Gantt chart and a table of breakdown for what you will be spending and why and that this should be completed with the R&D finance department at your trust.
- 13. When would the funding come into the successful applicants' trust, and would it be one payment managed by the R&D department?**  
It is up to your Trust finance team to invoice us. Usually, they invoice for all of it as it is a small award. Have that conversation with your finance department.
- 14. Will there be other opportunities for NIHR ARC Wessex funding?**  
At present, this is the last planned Internship opportunity with ARC Wessex as our current funding is scheduled to end September 2024
- 15. Can I include publication costs?**  
We encourage applicants to work with their mentors to find out if their host organisation covers this in the first instance. You can include the costs of publishing one article in your application if you have scope within your finance plans up to a maximum of £1500.
- 16. Can I include conference costs?**  
We encourage applicants to work with their mentors/supervisors to find out if their host organisation covers this in the first instance. You can include the costs of conference(s) attendance up to a maximum of £1500.

**17. Do I need to refer to and cost for Patient and Public Involvement PPI?**

Yes

Please indicate the ways in which you will involve patients and public in your research plans and include costs for any planned PPI activities. You can find further resources at: <https://www.nihr.ac.uk/documents/payment-guidance-for-researchers-and-professionals/27392>

**18. How does my employer receive the award funds?**

The full funding award amount is paid to your employer either at 50% mid-way through the project and 50% upon completion or 100% upon completion. Your employer/finance department is responsible for then paying invoices/costs for supervisory fees, training courses etc.

*The applicant, if successful, in collaboration with their Trust finance team, will be responsible for overseeing and administering the budget as per their proposed spending plan.*