

NIHR Three Schools Dementia Research Programme

Reducing the risk of dementia and improving the lives of people living with dementia
and carers

2021-2029

Dementia Career Development Awards: Call for Applications

26 June 2024

As part of it the NIHR Three School's Dementia Research Programme's commitment to developing research capacity in dementia-related practice, we are inviting applications for Individual Dementia Career Development Awards.

We are seeking high-quality applications for research career development awards from individuals who are committed to developing the evidence base to improve dementia-related practice in England. Applicants can request funding of up to £60,000.

Applications are expected to set out bespoke training and development plans that align to the applicant's career pathway and medium- to long-term objectives.

The deadline for submission is **16.00 on Wednesday 16 October 2024**.

Intentions to submit are requested by **16.00 on Wednesday 2 October 2024**.

1. Background

The NIHR Schools for Primary Care Research (SPCR), Public Health Research (SPHR) and Social Care Research (SSCR) ("three Schools") have joined together in a unique collaboration between leading academic centres in England on a programme of research and related work on dementia funded through the National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR).

The Three Schools' Dementia Research Programme aims to develop the evidence base for dementia-related practice in England by commissioning and conducting high-quality research. The Programme builds on research within each School and will carry out research to address key gaps in the evidence base working collaboratively across primary care, public health and social care.

The [Three Schools' Programme of Work](#) sets out further details and should be read prior to responding to this Call for Applications.

2. The requirement

We are seeking high-quality applications for career development awards from individuals who are committed to developing the evidence base to improve dementia-related practice in England.

This may include individuals already working in dementia research, education or practice at any career level, or people with research expertise in an aligned sector, topic area or discipline who wish to bring their skills and experience to the dementia field. We are keen to support professionals working in primary care, public health and/or adult social care who wish to develop their research capacity, as well as individuals who are already in research careers.

Applicants will need to make a strong case to the NIHR Three Schools' Dementia Research Programme for the proposed plan for their career development, with a clear commitment to establishing or consolidating a long-term career in dementia-related research, including the organisational 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 or develop their research capacity.

Applications should fit with the remit of the NIHR Three Schools' Dementia Research Programme and show evidence of engaging with our priorities, as set out in our Programme of Work. Elements of comparative work and career development with other UK countries may be considered, but the focus of the research capacity development is on England.

These awards focus on individual career development and are not suitable for substantive research projects. Awards may cover, for example, support to:

- pump-prime early career researcher (ECR)-led collaborative research;
- provide an opportunity for an ECR to gain experience in developing and leading their own research project and to build their networks across the three Schools;
- dedicate time to focus on a research proposal or fellowship application to a funder of dementia-related research, alongside targeted career development activities;
- undertake a personalised training and development plan which is clearly cemented into a research career;
- undertake a formal qualification relevant to dementia research;
- enhance research skills to support evidence-informed practice;
- transition from a relevant professional career to be active as a researcher in dementia-related practice over the longer term;
- adapt expertise in an area outside dementia-related practice to apply skills in dementia research. For example, this may be to explore applying existing methodological expertise in dementia research.

Where applicants are applying for support to develop a subsequent fellowship or research application as part of their career development plans, the intended target funding stream, deadline for the application and broad topic area would need to be specified in the application for this award. A brief justification is required for why the topic chosen is a priority for dementia-related practice and the targeted funding body. The preparatory work that this award would support also needs to be clear in the application.

Host organisation support

Applicants do not need to be based currently within an NIHR School, but must - as part of their career development award - establish a strong link with one or more of the universities across at least two of the Schools. At least one supporter for the application should be based within an NIHR School.

Career development awards should be hosted by the appropriate organisation for the activity proposed. This may be the applicant's current organisation (such as a university, NHS Trust or local authority or service provider) or it may be hosted in an alternative setting but does require convincing academic support. Justification for the host should be set out in the application form and confirmation of relevant organisation support

provided. Awards can be co-hosted by two complementary organisations if appropriate. Applicants are asked to consider how they will develop networks within dementia research that extend beyond their own organisation.

Successful applicants will be required to participate in the life of the NIHR Three Schools' Dementia Research Programme and related NIHR School(s), including relevant events. Each successful applicant will be supported by a senior member of the appropriate School.

3. Selection criteria

Applications will be reviewed using the following criteria:

- A strong applicant research and/or practice profile, with clear alignment to the remit of the NIHR Three Schools' Dementia Research Programme
- A strong case for personal development through this award
- A proposal clearly in line with the applicant's current career stage
- A clear training/development plan that is integral to the award
- A clear endpoint and objectives for the research career development award
- A longer-term commitment to a research career in dementia
- Strong and appropriate support in the applicant's environment that will be sustained beyond the award to continue to help establish the applicant's research career
- Value for money
- An appropriate level of mentorship or collaboration across two or three NIHR Schools.

4. Duration

Awards must be completed by 31 December 2028. The duration of the award should reflect the nature of the development plan and be fully justified. Successful applications in this round can start from January 2025 but must commence no later than 1 June 2025.

5. Funding available

Funding is available for awards of up to £60,000. Applications applying at the higher end of these awards will need to make a strong case for value for money. We expect to make awards across this range and do not anticipate making all awards at the higher end. (The Programme recognises that salaries for individuals at mid- or higher-level positions may be at the higher end of the budget available.)

Costs for the applicant's salary, training (formal or short) courses and events, and direct costs linked to the career development award are eligible. The Programme does not fund supervision or mentoring costs.

This Programme does not provide full economic costs. Universities, other HEIs and other applicants can request up to 30% of salary costs in overheads. All other costs can be included as direct costs for proposals as far as possible and fully justified. It is for the

applicant and relevant host organisation to determine whether to apply overheads. These will be included as part of the budget requested.

Funding will be paid to the host organisation.

6. Application process

Intentions to submit should be submitted using the “[Intention to Submit](#)” form by **16.00 on Wednesday 2 October 2024**. This will enable us to plan our administrative work for processing the award.

The deadline for full applications is **16.00 on Wednesday 16 October 2024**. Completed applications should be uploaded and submitted at <https://www.sscr.nihr.ac.uk/internal-proposals/three-schools-dementia/dementia-career-development-awards-submission-2024/>.

Declarations on the application form need to be signed by relevant authorised signatory within the main host organisation. Applicants should submit the form electronically - electronic signatures are acceptable. Where the declarations are signed in hard copy, a scanned version of these should be submitted alongside a PDF of the final application (scanned versions of the full PDF should not be submitted as they are not easily readable).

Commissioning process

All applications will be initially assessed to ensure that they are within the remit of this call, meet required criteria and that the form has been fully completed. All applications successfully passing this triage stage will be reviewed by the NIHR Three Schools’ Dementia Research Programme Commissioning Panel.

Applicants will be informed of the School’s decision and receive any specific feedback in early November 2024. Should further clarification be required for applications recommended for funding, applicants will be provided with time to respond to the Panel’s queries in November 2024, with a view to finalising projects for contracting processes soon after.

7. Contractual arrangements

Contractual processes will be managed by the NIHR Three Schools’ Dementia Research Programme. A contract for successful awards will be issued by LSE to the main host institution for the award based on standard Programme terms.

8. Further calls

A further call for Career Development Award applications may be issued in 2025, subject to funding availability.

9. Queries

Please email sscr@lse.ac.uk and the most appropriate person will reply as soon as possible.