**NHS Scotland Assure Research Service**

**Guidelines for research applications**

**Overview**

NHS Scotland Assure exists to improve how risk is improved in the healthcare built environment across Scotland. Managing risk in the right way gives those involved in maintaining NHS buildings, facilities and equipment confidence and reassurance.

Patient safety is a fundamental requirement when delivering and operating healthcare facilities. The guidance and advice generated by NHS Assure helps ensure that patients, their carers and those delivering healthcare are in an environment which is not only safe but also effective and person centred.

Research plays a pivotal part in supporting this, as it ensures that produced guidance and given advice are based not only on best practice but also on best evidence.

The funding call aims to be as flexible as possible in order to create opportunities to progress research in the following eight areas:

1. Design, installation, commissioning and maintenance of water systems including drainage
2. Design, installation, commissioning and maintenance of ventilation systems
3. Pathogens, the microbiome, AMR, transmission risks and burden of disease in the hospital environment
4. Hospital design including size and single room provision; e.g. hand wash basin provision / waterless / surface design to reduce transmission
5. The built environment post-pandemic and lessons learned from COVID-19
6. Human factors/Ergonomics and Infection Prevention and Control in hospital design and the built environment and how it is used
7. Climate change requirements and the unintended consequences on built environment risks
8. The role of safety and harms in relation to medical gases, electrical systems and fire safety, and their impact on patient and staff safety in the hospital environment

We expect to fund applications across a range of types and sizes. We welcome applications from consortia, inter disciplinary teams and researcher from academia, practice and industry.

The size of the initiative depends on the requirements of the applicant as long as the costings and resources are justified.

**General Information**

Forms are to be downloaded from the [Edinburgh Napier University website](https://www.napier.ac.uk/research-and-innovation/business-and-innovation-hub/innovate-with-us/joint-research-and-innovation/funding-support/nhs-scotland-assure-research-service) and should be sent to NHSAResearchService@napier.ac.uk

The funding call remains open with key dates for peer review and panel outcomes detailed on the website.

**The next closing date is 31st July 2022.**

Successful applications will receive funding, from this round **by 30th September 2022**

All appropriate sections of the application form must be completed. Additional Annexes may also be attached along with your proposal but must be clearly labelled with the section number or an appropriate title for example - Letters of support, or Extra Details on Ethical Information. Failure to complete any section of the form, or to provide sufficient clear copies, may result in the application being delayed or not taken forward.

**Guidance Notes**

**Section 1 – Project Summary**

The title and project summary should be written in language accessible to a non-expert audience

Please indicate area(s) your project will target from the list provided, as per the objectives of NHS Scotland Assure

Funding will be available for two years and length will vary on the project but ultimately all projects **MUST** be completed by 31st March 2024

**Project Details**

This complete section should be minimum of **1 page but no more than 5 pages long**. The individual boxes highlights the detail required for each project and the guidance below outlines the expectations of what should, where appropriate, be covered.

**Project Outline**

Please describe the planned activities and how they will contribute to achieving your objective. This section should be completed layperson terms with no jargon. Example of info that could be included:

* *Introduction (citing key references, searches used, etc.) - summarising pervious work in the field (including any by the applicant), drawing attention to gaps in present knowledge and citing key references used.*
* *Results of any pilot studies*
* *Aims of the project*
* *Research questions to be asked and hypotheses to be tested*
* *Plan giving the practical details of how answers will be obtained to the questions posed, including:*
* *Subjects to be included in the study*
* *Methodology, expertise available, statistical power*
* *Study design*
* *Data processing and analysis*
* *how the results will be disseminated and publication documents*
* *Patient and public involvement - it is important that you identify all stakeholders who are relevant to the proposal. For each stakeholder group it must be clear how they will benefit from the proposed research, and, where appropriate, how they have been involved in the development of the application, as well as the plans for their involvement in the proposed research.*
* *Relevant additional material – any unusual items (questionnaires, diagrams of equipment, etc.) should be added as an annex to the Section.*

**Motivation for the Research**

The proposed research activities should form a coherent package based on the research scientific focus and priority needs set out by NHS Scotland Assure with specific and relevant deliverables within a set timeframe. Please also note any current or upcoming guidance from NHS Scotland and NHS Scotland Assure, which the research may affect.

**Targeted Outcomes and Timelines**

Provide an outline of the planned programme of work which should highlight significant phases of the project with key milestone/timelines**. Please see refer to section on ‘Progress Reporting’ about monitoring progress of projects.**

This can supplemented succinctly in a summary table or Gantt chart. All Projects must be complete and reported on by 31st March 2024.

**Justification of Requirements**

Describe the existing facilities including the resources for supervision, equipment, space, staffing, relevant departmental interests, and collaboration.

Outline a case for staff to justify expertise and workloads required for the research.

Attention is drawn to Section Two where **Justification of Resources** will require the applicant to justify expenditure including research for selecting particular types of equipment.

**Impact of Project**

Proposals should demonstrate how the intended impact clearly aligns to the needs of NHS Scotland Assure and provides an understanding of how outputs and evidence from the research commissioned will be disseminated and shared to inform key stakeholders and practice in the healthcare built environment. This could include publications and other public engagement methods.

**Key References**

No more than ten references should be given in the text and listed with the title, using Harvard or Vancouver format.

**Section 2 – Costings**

All costs that contribute to the Full Economic Costing of the proposal shall be included, so long as they fall within the guidelines below.

All costs shall be based on TRAC (for HEI’s) or similar validated project costing methodologies (for other Research Organisations) and entered under one of the following cost headings:

**Directly Allocated**: These are the costs of an Organisation’s research resources that will be charged to the project on the basis of estimated use, rather than actual costs. They include:

**Investigators***:* Proposals will need to show the costs of the Principal Investigator, Co-Investigators and any other staff whose time charged to the project will be based on estimates rather than actual costs.

**Estates:** These costs may include building and premises costs, basic services and utilities, and equipment maintenance not already included under other cost headings.

**Other Directly Allocated*:*** These costs must be applied by using one of the following four headings: 1. costs of pooled staff, 2. usage costs of research facilities, 3. central & distributed computing and 4. charge out rates for shared equipment.

**Directly Incurred**; These are costs that are specific to a project that can be charged as the cash value actually spent. The costs are supported by an audit record. They include:

**Staff:** payroll costs requested for staff, full or part-time, who will work directly on the project and whose time can be supported by a full audit trail during the life of the project.

**Travel and Subsistence:** funds for travel and subsistence for use by staff or patients who are directly engaged on the project where these are required by the nature of the work. Modest dissemination costs incurred during the life of the project may be included under this heading; however, funds for open access publication or conference attendance should not be included here.

**Equipment:** The cost of equipment dedicated to the project over £3000

**Other costs:** Costs of other items dedicated to the project, including consumables, survey fees, purchase/hire of vehicles, and items of equipment costing less than £3,000. Only in exceptional cases, when evidence is given that no computer support is available, and is essential to the project, will computers and associated hardware and software be provided. Library charges and the costs of recruiting project staff will not be met.

**Indirect Costs**: These include non-specific costs charged across all projects based on estimates that are not otherwise included as Directly Allocated costs.

All costing shall be at current prices, inclusive of VAT and other taxes where applicable, with no allowance for inflation. Any allowance for inflation that has been included in the full economic costing of the proposal by the Research Organisation must be excluded.

**Justification of Resources**

The following costs associated with the research project **must be justified:**

* All Directly Incurred costs

* Any Directly Allocated costs that are specific to the project. Full justification for the level of staff effort and shared facilities requested shall be included in the project.

* the amount of investigators’ effort, including writing up of the final report, and the associated estimated costs.

* the estimated costs associated with technicians specific to the project whose time cannot be supported by timesheets.

* research facilities and shared laboratory equipment which cannot be substantiated through usage records.

You **do not need to justify** the following Directly Allocated costs not specific to the project:

* Estates costs;

* General technical services provided to a department in such areas as health and safety, equipment maintenance, storerooms etc;

* Shared laboratory equipment.

You **do not need to justify** the Indirect costs.

**Section 3 – Applicant Details**

The information relating to the principal applicant and co applicants. In the case of consortia please provide details of all parties. If more space is require, please attach an additional Appendix to email when sending your application

**Section 4 – Governance**

**Ethical Approval**

The relevant box should be completed.

Ethical advice from the appropriate NHS Research Ethics Committee (REC) is required for any research proposal involving:

* + patients and users of the NHS. This includes all potential research participants recruited by virtue of the patient or user’s past or present treatment by, or use of, the NHS. It includes NHS patients treated under contracts with private sector institutions;

* + individuals identified as potential research participants because of their status as relatives or carers of patients and users of the NHS, as defined above;

* + access to data, organs or other bodily material of past and present NHS patients;

* + foetal material and IVF involving NHS patients;

* + the recently deceased in NHS premises;

* + the use of, or potential access to, NHS premises or facilities;

* + NHS staff recruited as research participants by virtue of their professional role.

In such cases the written approval of the Research Ethics Committee must be submitted to NHS Assure before a grant is paid. Information on applying for ethical review can be found on the [NRES website](https://www.hra.nhs.uk/about-us/committees-and-services/res-and-recs/).

Applications should also include written Ethical approval from the applicant’s institution or associated organisation where appropriate.

**Intellectual Property and Commercialisation**

Unless stated otherwise, and subject to the conditions set out below, the ownership of intellectual property, and responsibility for its exploitation, rests with the grantholder and the grantholder shall grant to NHS Scotland Assure a non-exclusive, perpetual, irrevocable, royalty free licence to use the intellectual property all of which shall be documented in a collaboration agreement between the parties.

 NHS Scotland Assure may, at its discretion, retain ownership of intellectual property.  This right, if exercised, will be set out in an additional condition at the time of award.

**Section 5 - Referees for Peer Review**

Provide details of five independent referees of whom Edinburgh Napier University may approach for assessment/peer review of the research proposal. Applications will only be accepted if details of 5 suitable (see below) referees have been provided. Nominated referees shall be experts in the research field and/or be able to provide an expert view on the value and benefits to users of the research proposal.

Investigators shall **not** provide referees**:**

* + from their own organisation,
	+ from current or proposed project partners,
	+ where any possible conflict of interest may arise.

Full contact details must be given for each referee, including at least one of telephone ore-mail.

**Section 6 - Declaration and authorisation**

This section should be completed by Head of the researcher’s organisation and the finance lead from said organisation. For the case of consortia this should be completed by the lead organisation. It is expected that the lead organisation will have sought these declaration from all relevant partners.

**Process for Applications**

Applications will be sent to peer-reviewers with peer review reports being generated to applicants.  Applicants will be asked to respond to the reviewers’ comments and will be given one week to do so.

Full Applications, peer-review reports and applicant’s responses to the peer-review reports will be considered by a panel in order to make a final decision on successful applications.

***Timeline***

The funding call remains open with key dates for peer review and panel outcomes detailed below:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Deadline for Applications**  | **Indicative timing of notification of outcome**  |
| 31st July 2022 | 30th September 2022 |
| \*November 2022 | \*January 2023 |

\*Please note this is subject to change and please refer to website for updated information.

**Progress Reports**

A Progress Report of no more than 2 pages will be required at 6 months for all projects or at an earlier pre-agreed date for shorter funded projects. A template will be provided by the ENU Project Manager and at NHSAResearchService@napier.ac.uk

The progress report should outline any of the original objectives in the grant application which may not be achievable together with, if necessary, proposals for amended objectives. The report should be submitted as an electronic copy.