



Guidance for the submission and review of research grant applications

Application process

A call for grant applications with a specified closing date will usually be advertised annually. Each year's call will have a specific focus set by the Trustees. Applications must be received by the deadline specified on the website in order to be considered for funding. Applications must be submitted in an electronic format (e.g. MS Word or PDF) using the Trust's grant application form by email. Three of the Trustees oversee the grant application process, seeking external expert review of shortlisted applications. They will recommend applications for funding to the Board of Trustees for final decisions on awards, based on the review criteria outlined below.

In order for an application to be eligible for funding, the lead applicant must be a registered nurse working in England or Wales and the proposed research study must be undertaken in England and/or Wales. The Trust welcomes proposals from early career researchers who are supported, as appropriate, by more expert researchers. Collaborative bids between universities and the NHS, the voluntary, private or independent sector are welcomed.

Applicants are encouraged to consider linking their research to the research infrastructure in their country (England or Wales) or region. Clinically-focused studies undertaken within the NHS should consider adoption by NIHR Research Delivery Network and successful applicants are advised to discuss this with the Research Office in the NHS Trust in which they will undertake the research.

Trustees are not in a position to comment prior to or after the submission of a grant application. Canvassing of Trustees will result in the application being withdrawn by the Trust.

Please note in 2026 the GNCT has two separate calls (1) a research study and (2) a review. Please ensure you complete the correct application form related to the remit described.

Eligible costs

The Trustees have limited funds available and grants will be made within this context. The normal maximum award is £40,000, dependent on the specific call. The Trust will **not** fund organisational overheads, purchase of equipment or dissemination costs such as conference attendance and publications. Payment of the award is conditional upon gaining ethical and research governance approvals as appropriate.

Funding will not normally be available to support personal study.

Project Review process

Grant applications will be shortlisted by a panel of three Trustees to ascertain whether they fulfill the following criteria:

1. A proposal for a research study (or review) that focuses on an aspect of nursing policy / practice / education as outlined in the specific focus of the call.
2. The funding requested falls within the maximum amount specified in the call.



3. The lead applicant is an early career registered nurse researcher working in nursing practice, education, management or research in England or Wales
4. The proposed research (or review) is to be undertaken in England and/or Wales.
5. The application was received prior to the deadline for submission.
6. The proposed study addresses a defined research (or review question) using a recognised research methodology.

Applications for research studies that fulfill the above criteria, may undergo independent peer review. External reviewers will be selected on the basis of their expertise of the topic and/or methodology of the proposed research. Reviews will consider the following:

1. Are the aims and objectives of the study clearly focused and can the identified research questions be adequately addressed?
2. Has the applicant critically reviewed the current published literature where appropriate?
3. Is the design of the study likely to allow the research aims to be met?
4. Has due consideration been given to adequate analysis in study design or in the handling of the data produced? (To include statistical analysis where appropriate)
5. How does the study inform/contribute to the development of the nursing profession?
6. Will the findings from the study be generalisable/transferable beyond the location where the research is to be undertaken?
7. Can the study be completed in the time proposed, and with the resources requested?
8. Does the research team have the appropriate expertise to complete the project successfully? Are the roles and contributions of different members of the team made clear?
9. Does the study represent good value for money? Have the resources requested been fully justified?
10. Does the proposed study adhere to relevant research governance, ethical and legal requirements (e.g. data protection)?
11. Is there a dissemination strategy which enables the findings from the research to be shared widely?

Applications for the systematic review (or equivalent) grant should ensure the following questions are addressed:

1. Are the review question(s) or sub questions clearly articulated and will they be addressed by the proposed review?
2. Has the literature and relevant policy been described to contextualise and justify the review?
3. Has the review methodology been described and selection justified?
4. Has the search strategy been clearly described including strategy for inclusion/exclusion, adjudication of disagreements and appropriate reporting guidelines selected?
5. Has the method for extraction, assessment of quality of included studies/risk of bias and analysis and synthesis been described?
6. Has a statement regarding any proposed use of AI been included?
7. Can the review be completed in the time proposed and resources requested?
8. Does the proposed review team have the appropriate expertise to complete the review and are contributions of individual members clear?
9. Does the review represent value for money?
10. Is there a dissemination and impact strategy described that suggests the findings of the review will reach widest possible audience and achieve maximum impact?



The Board of Trustees will decide the award of grants, based on the recommendations of the reviewers and the funding available.

The Board of Trustees is not in a position to provide feedback on individual grant applications. Summaries of feedback may be provided to successful applicants to inform enhancements to their research.

Conditions of awards

Awards will be made for a specified amount for completion of the proposed research outlined in the application within the specified timescale. Project timelines can be amended on approval of the Trust and once ethical and governance approvals are received. The following conditions of funding apply:

1. Ethical and governance approval, where appropriate, must be obtained before starting data collection. The awardee must inform the Trust in writing once all approvals have been obtained, or that such approvals are not required.
2. 50% of the grant will be paid following confirmation of ethical / governance approvals for research studies and on start date specified in the application for reviews.
3. A further 30% will be paid upon receipt of a satisfactory interim report at the mid-stage of the study, which will be reviewed by the Trustees.
4. The final report with an executive summary should be submitted to the GNCT within 3 months of the project completion date.
5. The final 20% will be paid when the final report has been approved by the Trustees.
6. Payments will be made within 30 days of receipt of an invoice addressed to the Trust, once conditions above have been made.
7. One year from completion of the project, GNCT will request a brief update on publications, dissemination, further research and impact achieved as a result of the GNCT-funded project.
8. Templates are provided for the interim and final reports.
9. Any request for an extension to the project end date should be made in the interim report, or no later than 3 months before the original agreed end date.
10. Any changes to the research project, timeline, staff or hosting institution should be notified to the Trust as soon as possible.
11. A statement regarding (any) use of AI should be included in all reports.
12. The Trust may terminate the award if the above conditions are not met.