

GUIDANCE FOR RESEARCH FUNDING

1. Objective

- 1.1 To aid research and development that will contribute to the effective, efficient and economical facilities management of the property and equipment used for healthcare and its environment, and to promote appropriate, excellent design, and value for money in new building works.

2. General Information

- 2.1 There is no upper or lower limit as to the amount that is requested, however, the fund aims to support several projects that provide value for money.
- 2.2 The funds support research and development work directly related to primary and secondary healthcare premises and facilities management questions of practical application in the NHS.
- 2.3 Any NHS body or individual, private companies or higher education may submit bids for research or development funding. Funds are allocated to R&D projects if they satisfy the criteria set out in section 3.
- 2.4 All suggested and/or proposed bids should be completed on a formal Research and Development application form.
- 2.5 Results or outcomes from the projects are freely available and disseminated to the NHS. The outcomes may contribute or lead to Health Technical Memoranda (HTMs) or Health Building Note (HBNs), or best practice guidance.
- 2.6 Bids are received all year round and applicants may submit more than one bid or proposal. Please send all completed forms to Christian Richardson, Knowledge Management & Research, Estates & Facilities Division, Department of Health, Room 3N34D Quarry House, Quarry Hill, Leeds, LS2 7UE by the dates specified on the website. Please note that these dates can be subject to change.

3. Criteria

- 3.1 The project should involve original research or development, not repetition of previous work, although reassessment of current best practice for improvement may be considered.
- 3.2 The projects should enable NHS bodies to apply best practice in their planning of healthcare facilities.
- 3.3 The fund will give priority to projects relevant to the national agenda, and in particular to the national priorities of the NHS.

- 3.4 The project should be capable of completion within an acceptable timescale, as agreed at the outset of programme schedule.
- 3.5 A summary of the final report is freely available for dissemination across the NHS. These are also available through the Knowledge & Information Portal (KIP), and some are printed in hard copy. Best practice or further detailed guidance developed from the outcomes may feed into NHS guidance such as HTMs or HBNs.
- 3.6 The cost of a project will be weighed against the potential benefits, whether revenue saving or improved health care provision, value for money or quality.
- 3.7 All proposals should demonstrate:
- collaboration between professionals, institutions or services
 - clear patient benefit
 - economic analysis of key findings

4. Areas of research

- 4.1 The Department of Health does not seek to control applications but to ensure that the research has a focus. Areas of research will be specified on the DH Estates & Facilities Division website where there is list of all current R&D projects.
- 4.2 The Research and Development Advisory Panel encourages research in the following areas, with an overarching interest in sustainability and economic benefit:
- Infection control
 - Decontamination
 - Environments for older people
 - Space and Design
 - Mental health & learning disabilities
 - Strategy for the physical environment

Other topical areas including those that appear to be high on the national agenda are also considered.

5. Applications for funding

- 5.1 All applicants making a bid for funding must complete an application form.
- 5.2 All applications for funding must include a project plan and a one page CV on each named applicant.
- 5.3 The Research & Development Advisory Panel will make funding recommendations, based upon the assessment of applications, to the fund manager (who may take other advice) before funding approval is granted.
- 5.4 Once approval is formalised, the Knowledge Management & Research section will issue an agreement (contract) for the research project with advice from the Panel. The Advisory Panel will also advise on the subsequent progress and output from funded projects and on the quality and value.

5.5 The Advisory Panel will also recommend how the results of the research are disseminated.

6 Full Economic Costing

Full Economic Costing represents a change to the way universities calculate the cost of the research they carry out.

Under FEC there will be 4 main categories of cost. These will be:

- Directly incurred
- Directly allocated
- Indirect
- Exceptions

The total of these four will be the full economic cost. Estates & Facilities research programme will pay a proportion of that amount, rather than the full amount, to reflect the fact that the NHS is a funder of the UK research base and specifically research which provides a public scientific good. The proportion allocated is dependent upon whether the award institution is educational (80% of FEC) or other (100% research costs).

Directly incurred costs

These are costs which you would normally expect to see, such as staff salaries, travel, equipment (up to £50k, see “exceptions” below) etc. These costs would not arise if the piece of research did not take place.

Directly allocated costs

There are three types:

- Cost of investigators – i.e. the senior academics on the project such as the Principal investigator and Co-investigator. Instead of using actual salaries, (as for research assistants) these may be costed on the basis of percentage of working week and average salaries.
- Estate charges – arrived at by each university on the basis of a nationally agreed formula, and applied to the number of fte research staff on the project.
- Research facilities or equipment, where the project makes use of such items, which are “shared” by a wide range of users across the university.

These costs would arise for the university whether or not this particular piece of research took place.

Indirect costs

These are to cover the admin costs of running a university and providing facilities such as library services, IT, laboratory services etc. Like estate charges, these are arrived at by each university on the basis of a nationally agreed formula, and applied to the number of fte research staff on the project.

Exceptions

Where the total of equipment costs for a project exceeds £50k the amount over that limit will be termed exceptional. As stated above, NHS R&D will only be paying a proportion of the Full Economic Cost, however it is recognized that where equipment costs are large it might jeopardise the trial if the funder were not to meet the majority of those costs and therefore any equipment cost over £50k will be met in full. This means that whilst we will pay up to 80% of directly incurred, directly allocated and indirect costs, we will pay 100% of exceptional costs.