

THE NIHR FACULTY

Introduction

The vision of the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) is to improve the health and wealth of the nation through research.

This document sets out how the NIHR Faculty is contributing to this vision.

Overview

The purpose of the NIHR Faculty is to identify and bring together the people who are funded by the NIHR or by the Department of Health's Policy Research Programme (DH PRP) to support clinical and applied health and social care research.

The Faculty empowers and develops the NIHR community of research professionals, to improve the nation's health, wellbeing and prosperity. The Faculty achieves this by creating a sense of common purpose and identity around shared values that cut across organisational and professional boundaries.

The NIHR Faculty comprises three categories of membership: Investigators (including Senior Investigators), Associates and Trainees. The Faculty encompasses research, clinical and support staff from all relevant professional backgrounds.

Aim

The NIHR Faculty aims to:

- Attract, develop and retain the best research professionals to conduct and support people-based research.
- Focus the talents of faculty members on health research that meets the current and future needs of patients and the public.
- Value leaders, collaborators and those who support research
- Encourage a diverse research workforce.

Benefits

The Faculty offers the following benefits to members:

- Belonging to a vibrant community of outstanding individuals exchanging ideas about research and innovation to improve the health and well-being of the nation.
- Obtaining prestige through association with NIHR, in particular, for those selected as NIHR Senior Investigators
- Personal benefits, such as eligibility of Senior Investigators to seek NIHR nomination for clinical excellence awards.
- Access to web and information resources, including newsletters and services which facilitate collaborative electronic working.
- Opportunity to attend meetings, workshops and training forums, focused on particular groups within the Faculty.
- Access to support, such as mentoring and career advice, research design services, leadership support and development, and continuous professional development.
- Funding for research, and discretionary funds for Senior Investigators.

Faculty membership offers the following benefits to employers:

- Better quality healthcare and better health outcomes from involvement of staff in research.
- A more motivated workforce, and a more attractive environment for attracting and retaining staff.
- Access to funding, both for research projects and for Trust Research Capability Funding. Details are available on the [NIHR website](#).

Eligibility

Faculty members are those individuals:

- Who conduct or support patient or people-based research; and
- Whose salary is funded, in part or in whole, by NIHR and/or DH PRP funding; or who are funded through approved NIHR training programmes; and
- Who are employed by an NHS body or other provider of NHS services, a university, or a registered charity, which in each case is based in England.

The NIHR/DH PRP funding which supports a Faculty member's salary may be paid directly to their employer, or may be paid to a partner organisation, which then makes a funding transfer to the Faculty member's employer.

NIHR Investigators

NIHR Investigators are those Faculty members who are directly engaged in doing research (i.e. the main element of their salary related to research is a 'Research Cost'). This includes all the research staff working on a research project, lead researchers, other senior researchers, and research assistants.

The main NIHR/PRP source of funding for the element of their salary which is related to research is funding from NIHR Research Programmes, NIHR Research Centres and Units or from DH PRP. Their salary may also, at local discretion, be funded in part from Research Capability Funding (RCF). Often, the NIHR contribution will be

only one element of an NIHR Investigator's salary. An NIHR Investigator's salary may also be funded in part from other sources of research funding (e.g. Research Councils, Research Charities or HEFCE) and/or from other sources of NHS funding.

NIHR Senior Investigators

NIHR Senior Investigators are among the most prominent and prestigious researchers funded by the NIHR and the most outstanding leaders of patient and people-based research.

NIHR Senior Investigators are selected in annual competition, from amongst NIHR Investigators. Selection criteria include the excellence of their research in comparison to other research in their field, the relevance of their research to patients and the public, the impact of their research on healthcare, social care and public health, and the impact of their personal leadership on patient and people-based research, including their contribution to NIHR. A term can last from three to five years and is renewable for one further term, provided the individual remains eligible and meets the competitive standard.

Together, members constitute the College of Senior Investigators. NIHR Senior Investigators provide visible leadership within the NIHR, both individually and collectively through the College. Members also act as a key source of advice to the Director of Research and Development and the Chief Medical Officer.

Senior Investigators are each awarded a recurrent fund of £15k per year, which may be used flexibly at the Senior Investigator's professional discretion within their employer's governance arrangements. In addition, NHS institutions with whom Senior Investigators are associated and which are eligible for RCF attract an additional element of RCF for each of their Senior Investigators.

On completion of a second successful term, the Senior Investigator is awarded the title Senior Investigator Emeritus in recognition of the work they have carried out and continue to do as long as they are in substantive employment in England. Emeritus Senior Investigators no longer receive the discretionary award or Research Capability Funding related to their status; however, they are invited to the annual Senior Investigator meeting held each November.

NIHR Associates

NIHR Associates are those Faculty members who support research led by others. They include the following individuals:

- Clinical and clinical support staff, such as doctors recruiting patients, research nurses, allied health professionals and others;
- Scientific, laboratory and technical staff;
- Study facilitators, study practitioners and data managers;
- Research management and governance staff and other local clinical research network staff.

The main NIHR source of funding for the element of their salary relating to NIHR research will in most cases be through an NIHR Clinical Research Network, but funding may also come through Research Centres and Units, Clinical Research

Facilities, Collaborations for Leadership in Applied Health Research & Care, or through NIHR grants. Their salary may also, at local discretion, be funded in part from RCF. Often, the NIHR contribution will be only one element of an NIHR Associate's salary, the remainder being supported by other sources of NHS funding.

NIHR Trainees

NIHR Trainees are the next generation of researchers. Many of these Faculty members are on NIHR training schemes, details of which are available on the [NIHR website](#). Others are supported through NIHR infrastructure where there is a remit to capacity build. NIHR Trainees include:

- Individuals whose salary is supported through NIHR training schemes awarded in national competition, whether 'open' or targeted to specific professions.
- NIHR-funded PhD students based mainly in NIHR Biomedical Research Centres (BRCs), Biomedical Research Units (BRUs), Collaborations for Leadership in Applied Health Research and Care (CLAHRCs) and Patient Safety Translational Research Centres (PSTRCs).
- Trainees supported through approved training programmes offered by NIHR Schools.

Membership Responsibilities

NIHR Investigators should indicate in NIHR research applications how their activities will contribute to collective research endeavour in England.

NIHR Investigators are expected to provide advice on research issues within their expertise, including by serving on review panels and by carrying out peer review. Members of the College of NIHR Senior Investigators may also be asked to advise the Director of Research and Development and the Chief Medical Officer.

Membership Details

Details of all NIHR Faculty members are maintained through separate systems, but an integrated people database for the NIHR is being created. Details of NIHR Senior Investigators are available on the NIHR website, at [Senior Investigator Directory](#).

A directory of NIHR researchers was introduced into the NIHR with the launch of the NIHR Hub in 2014. Every user of the NIHR Hub is automatically entered into the Directory along with basic contact details. Users have the ability to enhance this with additional information including areas of study and interest making it a powerful tool to locating other Faculty members.

Members of the NIHR Faculty are asked to supply personal data to enable NIHR to monitor and report on investment of public funds in the research workforce, and to ensure this promotes equality of opportunity. Sensitive personal data will be collected confidentially with anonymity preserved.

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