

i4i PDA Call 20 - FAQ

Can a commercial SME be a joint lead?

Yes, provided as the joint lead, the SME is based in England. An explanation should be provided to justify why joint leads are required to lead the proposed research and how this brings value to the application.

Can an application be for more than one activity? e.g. RCT for clinical effectiveness, CE marking, and economic impact analysis

Absolutely, as long as all the activities are directly relevant and support the development of the principal technology. In fact we expect to see varied work packages that link together for comprehensive product development.

How many collaborators or partners can be involved in the project? And how would the budget be separated between them? Under what criteria we should choose the lead applicant?

Up to 7 collaborators can be involved in the project but you would need to ensure that effective control of the project can be maintained. There would also need to be detailed collaboration agreements with all the collaborators to ensure this, particularly to protect what happens to intellectual property and the participants' freedom to operate. The budget will be attributed to each collaborator based on the lead applicant cost allocation based on the proposed work.

Can early work conducted now, before funding is awarded, still be claimed and funded at a later date if successful, or are there restrictions on when costs are incurred i.e. this must be after the project start date after 1/4/21?

Earlier work, prior to project commencement will not be funded and therefore should not be claimed. Project costs can only be incurred from the start date of the project.

Is there a preference for projects in specific clinical areas?

No. The i4i PDA programme is not based on themes. However, the relevance in terms of patient benefit and savings to the NHS will be an important factor in deciding which projects to fund.

Are there any examples of funded projects we could review?

On our website, we have a search tool to find information about past and present funded projects. Please take a look here <https://fundingawards.nihr.ac.uk/search>

Do you encourage early career researchers to apply with lesser track records of funding? Or are you looking to work with more established researchers?

Project team is part of our assessment criteria. We expect applicants to have the appropriate skills to ensure project success. You are welcome to apply as a lead and if you feel it is necessary to have a more established researcher in the project team they can be made co-applicant in your application.

I'm a fixed term researcher at a HEI. Do I need to have a full-time permanent contract to submit an application as a PI?

There is no rule stating that you need to be on the tenure track in order to submit an application. We encourage you to ensure that you have the necessary approvals from your research development office/ faculty dean (or equivalent) as per your governance.

Are you able to share a previously successful example application? (appropriately redacted)

Unfortunately we are not able to share a previously successful example application. However, we would advise getting in touch with your local Research Design Service (RDS). The RDS provides support to health and social care researchers across England on all aspects of developing and writing a grant application including research design, research methods, identifying funding sources and involving patients and the public. Advice is confidential and free of charge.

Scottish organisations cannot lead. Is there an equivalent mechanism for Scottish HEIs?

There is currently no equivalent mechanism for Scottish HEIs however, CSO grant funding could be a suitable scheme.

I am unclear about the consent clause in the standard NIHR research contract. Since there is no equity in the company, a clause potentially stopping IP being used can cause problems for SMEs, in particular for future funding as it may limit the commercial strategy.

Consent for commercialisation/ exploitation of NIHR funded research is granted on a case by case basis. We do not wish to prevent IP from being exploited since commercialisation is usually required to enable patient benefit from the research. Likewise, we consider SME growth and leveraging further investment to be a success metric of our programme. The consent clause within our contract is there as a safeguard to ensure any future terms are fair and reflect the investment made by the UK taxpayer.

I have developed a COVID-19 related technology and seeking funding for further development. Can I apply for an i4i funding competition?

If the proposed COVID-related technology will deliver public health benefits in 12 months, please apply to the NIHR/UKRI-MRC COVID-19 Rapid Response Rolling call, link [here](#). Alternatively, if the proposed COVID-related technology will deliver public health benefit beyond 12 months, it will be out of scope for the COVID-19 Rapid Response call, but can be submitted to one of our open i4i competitions provided that it meets our eligibility criteria.