

How does NIHR Clinical Trials Unit Support Funding work?

Background

NIHR CTU Support Funding was first introduced in 2008. It is intended to provide sustainability and support to units involved in NIHR research. Funding is awarded to help units support NIHR applications and funded projects, and develop their portfolio and NIHR activities.

Units located in England and holding a current UKCRC CTU registration (full or provisional) are eligible for consideration. Awards are granted on an institutional basis. In cases where there is more than one unit in an institution, units are required to form a consortium arrangement for a single funding award.

Since 2018, NIHR CTU Support Funding comprises both fixed and variable funding elements.

1) Fixed Element

Units are awarded three year fixed-term contracts initially (with expectation of extension subject to satisfactory performance). The NIHR will reserve the right to decrease funding or terminate a contract if appropriate performance is not achieved.

2) Variable Element

Funding will support awards for new units (initial contracts) and annual funding calls in specific development areas.

Funding opportunities for new units will be informed by UKCRC CTU registration processes.

Annual funding calls will provide an opportunity for units to bid for additional funds in specified areas. Call areas will be developed but will be focused around developments to aid the conduct of NIHR research; design and delivery of efficient and innovative research will continue to feature.

Annual Review

Units will be subject to light-touch annual review to assess activity and compliance with the contract. More extensive reviews will be undertaken to consider funding extension at appropriate points.

The principal metric will be eligible NIHR research programme activity and income. All research studies funded by the following NIHR programmes are eligible; *Efficacy and Mechanism Evaluation (EME)*, *Health Services and Delivery Research (HSDR)*, *Health Technology Assessment (HTA)*, *Invention for Innovation (i4i)*, *Programme Grants for Applied Research (PGfAR)*, *Public Health Research (PHR)*, and *Research for Patient Benefit (RfPB)*. Studies must also have commenced after the first NIHR CTU Support Funding Award is made to a unit.

A minimum annual NIHR income target of four-times the unit award will apply. For example an award of £51,000 will be expected to achieve a minimum annual income of £204,000 from eligible NIHR research programmes. Units failing to achieve this will be subject to closer scrutiny. Consistent failure to meet targets could result in reduced funding or contract termination / funding withdrawal.

For questions about NIHR CTU Support Funding, please email nihrctu@nihr.ac.uk.