NIHR Researchfish guidance 2017

What is Researchfish?
Researchfish is an external system used by the NIHR to collect information on the research activities that are undertaken by its award holders. On an annual basis, NIHR-funded researchers and trainees are asked to submit data about their outputs, outcomes and impacts. The information on this page is about the use of Researchfish by the NIHR. The NIHR wishes to underline the importance of its researchers and trainees engaging with the system to return information to us.

Why is Researchfish important?
The NIHR has a responsibility to demonstrate the value and impact of the research it funds. The NIHR uses information from researchers and trainees on the outputs, outcomes and impact of their NIHR funded projects to report to both the Government and the public. As well, this data is analysed to understand the process of NIHR research and its effects on patients and feed into our strategic planning. The systematic collection of research outputs, outcomes and impact enables the NIHR to:

- provide a strong evidence base to support the continued funding of health research in the UK
- improve the quality of reporting research outcomes to Government, the public and other organisations
- maintain a longer-term relationship with award holders to capture new developments and impacts from research after an award has finished.

Why use Researchfish?
The NIHR uses Researchfish as we believe it to be an accessible and user-friendly web-based outcomes collection system. The key benefits of Researchfish are:
researchers and trainees, or their delegates, can log onto Researchfish at any time and add details of new activities

· the data will remain in Researchfish, so you will not have to enter this information again, but only update it in the future

· used by over 100 research organisations and funders, which makes it possible for researchers to provide information to multiple funders in one place, thereby reducing their administrative burden.

Where can I find help and support to use Researchfish?
Researchfish provides a wealth of information and support for researchers. You can access this via the helpwiz or by clicking ‘Help and support’ in the Researchfish interface.

NIHR provides further support through our web page where you can find FAQs, webinars and downloads. If you have any questions or queries regarding the NIHRs use of Researchfish or specific NIHR awards that are not covered by our FAQs you can contact the NIHR evaluation team via evaluation@nihr.ac.uk

What information is reported to Researchfish?
A wide range of information about the outputs, outcomes and impact of research can be reported through Researchfish. Within Researchfish there are three types of question sets which it uses to systematically gather information:

· Common question set – this refers to output, outcome and impact questions, divided into 16 categories, that are asked by all funders for all researchers who use Researchfish. NIHR award holders are encouraged to report information in sections relevant to their research outputs, outcomes and impacts. You can download a copy of the common question set through the Researchfish ‘Help and support’ function.

· Funder specific question set(s) or additional questions – these are questions defined and requested by specific funders that are asked to recipients of their awards.

· Award specific question set(s) – these are questions defined and requested by specific funders in relation to a sub-set of awards. The NIHR currently has a small number of award specific questions in use. Where award specific questions are in use completion of these questions is mandatory.

How to access Researchfish and complete an annual submission?
How to access Researchfish and complete a submission depends slightly on your personal circumstances:
• **New NIHR award holders** will be contacted by email to invite you to create a Researchfish account by clicking on the link contained in the email.

• **Existing NIHR award holders** should already have a Researchfish account just log in as usual. If you have a new NIHR award you will need to click on the link emailed to you to link your new award to your existing Researchfish account.

• Those that **already have a Researchfish account through another funder** will need to click on the link emailed to you to link your new award to your existing Researchfish account.

Within your account you will be able to view information about your NIHR award(s). If you hold awards with other funders that use Researchfish you will also be able to view these.

Award holders can access their Researchfish account at anytime and are strongly advised to update their portfolio throughout the year. To support this, researchers can add delegates. You can also add an ORCID.

Once a year, the NIHR opens a submission period when we ask that you review all your output information in Researchfish, allocate it to the appropriate awards, and confirm that this has been done by submitting this to us.

Please note that not all sections will be relevant to all research, especially if you have started your award recently. However, we do expect you to review all sections and remember that even activities such as putting together a questionnaire, count as research outputs.

**Publishing Data and sanctions policy**

The NIHR will only publish information which is attributed to NIHR research projects, programmes or fellowships and for which the submission process has been completed. Researchers and trainees are advised to not disclose data that conflict with agreements they may have with third parties, is sensitive, or is considered confidential.

The NIHR will contact researchers and trainees annually during the period of the award and for at least five years after the award has terminated.

We have a clear sanctions policy for those award holders who do not provide an annual Researchfish submission in accordance with their contractual requirements:

- the researcher or trainee may be ineligible for consideration for further NIHR awards
- payments may be withheld.

**Getting help**

Technical help using the Researchfish system can be accessed by clicking on ‘Help and support’ within the system. Here you will find FAQs, videos, support webinars and a very helpful user guide.

We provide information for NIHR researchers and research organisations that host NIHR awards [www.nihr.ac.uk/researchfish](http://www.nihr.ac.uk/researchfish). Here you can access our webinars and slides, infographics and FAQs. If you require information about the NIHRs use response codes then please view our response codes.
Get involved

NIHR is an active contributor to the Researchfish Funders Group. Recent developments NIHR has played a part in include:

- Development of a new career tracker tool
- Development of questions that focus on understanding the benefits and challenges of involving patients and the public in research
- Ongoing improvements to the question set.

Research Organisations and Researchers can contribute to ongoing development of the Researchfish system through the Research Organisations and Researchers User Groups. Contact Researchfish for more information enquiries@researchfish.com.