

Social Care Research Capacity Building Programme

Our collaboration - between Kingston University, King's College London, NIHR Applied Research Collaboration South London and the NIHR Policy Research Unit in Health and Social Care Workforce - has been awarded funding that can provide valuable development opportunities for you and your organisation.

Information sheet for applicants and employers

Aim of project: To share opportunities for social care staff to develop skills and knowledge about using research in the workplace. It aims to build research capacity in adult and children's social care by supporting applicants to engage in a range of activities.

The objectives of the project are to:

- Build research capacity and capability in social care practice, management and leadership
- Support the use of and development of research in the sector
- Improve research culture and infrastructure in adult and children's social care practice in under-served communities
- Promote equality, diversity and inclusion

Who can apply:

Applicants should work in the south London boroughs of Bexley, Bromley, Croydon, Greenwich, Kingston, Lambeth, Lewisham, Merton, Richmond, Wandsworth, Southwark or Sutton and be directly employed by one of the following organisations:

- a local authority;
- care providers (both residential and domiciliary care settings)
- a provider of local authority commissioned services; or
- a non-profit organisation (such as a charity) that provides services on behalf of a local authority or supports them in meeting their objectives

What are the criteria:

Applications will be assessed against the following criteria:

- A well-articulated learning plan/proposal to build research capacity in an underserved social care community in South London
- Awards will be prioritised from those working with underserved communities and those from diverse ethnic backgrounds
- Employer's written confirmation of their support for their staff application and agreement of time release.

What support will be offered:

We will provide a highly personalised, flexible, research capacity-building programme for social care practitioners. In addition to 1:1s / workshops we will offer Continuing Professional Development (CPD) opportunities from which awardees can select from a range of options which include:

- Designing, delivering and contributing to research, analysis and/or evaluation relevant to practice. This can be either within the awardee's own organisation or as part of an academic-led, joint practitioner academic team
- Access to mentorship/advice drop-in clinics
- Opportunities for peer learning from a community of applicants/award holders (workshops and/or action learning sets)
- To champion or implement evidence in social care practice, with potential Higher Education Institutions (HEI's) affiliation for library access
- Training and career development opportunities which include access to academic modules, such as the [independent work-based project](#) and [research project](#)
- Opportunities to consult with our Applied Research Collaboration (ARC) South London [Public and Patient Engagement and Involvement Research Panel](#) (PPIE)
- Mentorship during or post-award to awardees to become practitioner academic research leaders by helping them develop their capacity for research in a range of [developmental programmes supported by the NIHR](#) such as the [Pre-Doctoral Local Authority Fellowship Scheme](#)
- The national leads of this programme can offer a range of opportunities that awardees may like to attend to support their learning and build connections with fellow awardees.

The above examples to support awardees are not exhaustive and further opportunities can be tailored to suit their individual needs.

Financial support for employers.

Successful awardees will be offered two flexible routes, level 1 or level 2, depending on the scope of their research activity. The following sets out the level of financial support provided to employers to support time release for awardees.

Level 1

Employers will be provided with a payment of £250 per day minimum and up to a maximum of £5000 throughout the duration of the whole project to contribute to backfilling the awardee's post and research costs. This will allow time release for the awardee to engage in a research capacity activity, as outlined above, to be completed within 10 to 20 days.

Level 2

Employers will be provided with a payment of £250 per day minimum and up to a maximum of £9000 throughout the duration of the whole project to contribute to backfilling the awardee's post and research costs. This will allow time release for the awardee to engage in a research capacity activity, as outlined above, to be completed within 25 to 36 days.

These payments can be used flexibly; for block release or spread over the award period. There are up to 13 awards, this is dependent on whether awardees are choosing level 1 or 2. All research activities need to be completed by the end of the project, February 2026 and awardees will be invited with employers to a celebration sharing event in March 2026.

Applications will be assessed against the following criteria:

Score	Criteria
0-5	Strong motivation and rationale
0-5	Clear learning plan/proposal to build research capacity
0-5	Addresses underserved social care community in SL.
0-5	Area of priority for NIHR, aligned with expertise in SL ARC.
Total - max 20	Comments
eligible Y/N	Race Equality award - ambition to award 50% to applicants from ethnically underrepresented groups

Apply early to secure your place. **The closing date for applications is 9.00 am on 8th July 2024. You will be notified of your application outcome by the 31st of July.** If all the awards are not taken up in the first round, a further round may be offered in Spring 25.

For further information please do not hesitate to contact Maria Brent at SHARE@kingston.ac.uk to arrange an informal discussion.

Or please contact Maria if you would like to attend an online information workshop on **Wednesday 29th May, 12.30-1.30** or **Thursday 6th June, 11.30-12.30**.