



*National Institute for
Health Research*



Research Design Service

RDS South Central

Research by design

The Research Design Service (RDS) is funded by the Department of Health to provide high quality methodological support for researchers applying for National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) funding.



Part of the infrastructure of the NIHR, the RDS South Central is one of ten regional RDS teams, based around the ten SHA (Strategic Health Authority) regions in England. Led by Mark Mullee, RDS South Central provides support across the South Central region, with offices in Southampton, Oxford, Portsmouth, the Isle of Wight and Reading.

Our expertise

We have highly experienced Research Advisors and Senior Methodologists with expertise covering many aspects of research design. Between them our staff have been awarded over £25 million over the past five years. We are able to advise and provide practical support when you are developing your grant application. As the RDS is funded by the NIHR, our services are free of charge.

Do I qualify for support?

We will advise NHS researchers, and other researchers who are working in partnership with the NHS, to develop an application to a suitable funding body. Priority is given to those applying for NIHR funding programmes including the Research for Patient Benefit scheme. Details of some of the funding streams we support can be found on the right hand side.

Are you thinking of applying for research funding?

If so, we can advise on all aspects of preparing grant applications, including:

- Identifying appropriate research funding programmes
- Literature reviews
- Refining research objectives
- Designing your study
- Appropriate methodologies for quantitative research: e.g. statistical issues, health economics
- Appropriate methodologies for qualitative research: e.g. sampling, analytical strategies
- Planning research teams and budgets
- Patient and public involvement in research

We may also be able to help with funding for members of the public to participate in research design meetings.

How do I apply for research design support from the RDS?

To request our support please visit our web-site www.rds-sc.nihr.ac.uk and click the 'requesting support' link on the left hand side. Requests are considered by a multidisciplinary team on a weekly basis and you can expect a response from us within 2 weeks of completing the support form.



If your request for support is adopted by the RDS, you will be assigned a Research Advisor who will assist you with your research grant application and guide you through the support available from the RDS, which may include identifying a multi-disciplinary team of statisticians, qualitative analysts, health economists and PPI experts who can work together to develop a strong research proposal.

NIHR Funding programmes supported by us

We are primarily involved in assisting researchers applying for NIHR RfPB grants. However we are also able to assist with other NIHR funding programmes. For latest details of these funding programmes visit http://www.nihr.ac.uk/research/Pages/programmes_research_programmes.aspx. For convenience we have summarised some of the programmes in the table on the right.

Public and Patient Involvement (PPI)

Patient and Public Involvement in research is where patients or members of the public provide assistance to researchers in developing their research. They will help to shape the research but will not be a participant of the research itself. Reviews of research suggests that research that includes an element of PPI is often more reliable, valid and more likely to meet the patients' needs. Many funding streams now require PPI as a condition of funding.

Recruiting lay members to assist with research design can be a time consuming process. Therefore, here at the RDS we have our own PPI team who have recruited a body of people from both patient groups and interested members of the public who have expressed an interest in being consulted in research. For more details visit www.getinvolvedinresearch.org

The RDS is continuing to develop a range of tools to aid PPI in research. We can also help you to identify patients and public who may be interested in getting involved in your research.

When should I contact the RDS?

You may contact the RDS at any stage of your proposal development. We do, however, encourage you to contact us early in the planning process. We would advise that you allow a minimum of 6 months to assist you with your grant application.

What to do next?

To request our support all you need to do is visit our website and complete the online support request form.
www.rds-sc.nihr.ac.uk



Research for Patient Benefit (RfPB)

The RfPB funds research into everyday practice in the health service. Proposals must demonstrate a clear direct patient benefit.

Grants are available up to £250,000 over three years.

Programme Grants for Applied Research (PGfAR)

These prestigious grants are awarded to leading researchers with an impressive track-record of achievement in applied health research.

Grants are available up to £2 million for a period of between three and five years.

Invention for Innovation (i4i)

The i4i programme is designed to help bring new technologies and treatments to use within the NHS. With three substreams, projects can range from academic investigations to market research and commercial development.

Grants can range from between up to £100,000 and £300,000 and for between one and three years, depending on the funding stream.

Research for Innovation, Speculation and Creativity (RISC) programme

The RISC programme provides small discrete grants for new speculative and radical health research proposals that could lead to a step change in the care and management of patients. They are intended especially for proposals that are unlikely to gain support through traditional peer review.

Grants are available up to £100,000 for projects between 12 and 18 months.

Health Technology Assessment (HTA) programme

The HTA programme funds research to ensure that healthcare professionals, NHS managers, and the public and patients have the best and latest information on the costs, effectiveness and impact of developments in health technology.

Efficacy and Mechanism Evaluation (EME) programme

The EME programme is aimed at supporting 'science driven' studies with an expectation of substantial health gain. Proposed research must evaluate the clinical efficacy of an intervention, where proof of concept in humans has already been achieved, and may add significantly to our understanding of biological or behavioural mechanisms and processes.

Public Health Research (PHR) programme

The PHR programme commissions research to provide new knowledge on the benefits of non-NHS interventions such as prevention activities (e.g. speed humps to reduce accidents or action to prevent obesity in children).

There is no limit to the amount of money that can be awarded to a single proposal, although the total grant pot is limited and this will be taken into consideration when your application is assessed.

Health Services Research (HSR) programme

The HSR programme provides grants for projects that show they will lead to an increase in service quality and patient safety through improving planning and health service provision.

Grants are available up to £5 million and will be awarded to large projects that are beyond the scope of most other funding streams.

Service Delivery and Organisation (SDO) programme

The SDO programme commissions research on the way health services are organised and delivered by the NHS. The research is designed to help health practitioners, managers and policymakers improve the quality of patient care, the efficiency of health services and, ultimately, the health of the public.



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