

News

Inclusion now a key condition for NIHR funding

27 November 2024 3 min read

The NIHR has today (27 November 2024) officially launched a new requirement that all applicants demonstrate how their research will address existing inequalities in health and social care as a condition of funding.

The requirement will ensure that research is intentionally designed, conducted and communicated inclusively, and researchers will be held to account for delivering on their plans.

First [announced earlier this year](#) (/inclusive-research-design-become-nihr-condition-funding), the requirement currently applies to domestic applicants only. It is supported by new [Guidance for Applicants](#) (/about-us/who-we-are/research-inclusion/funding-application-guidance), which includes links to important resources and materials for applicants and their institutions.

Why are we doing this?

Historically, [research has not always taken place where the need is greatest](https://link.springer.com/article/10.1186/s12916-020-01555-4#Abs1) (https://link.springer.com/article/10.1186/s12916-020-01555-4#Abs1). This means that the benefits of research, or side effects of treatments, might not have always translated to real-world populations. Not conducting research with diverse populations can also lead to new treatments or services not being deliverable to all groups. Important findings specific to particular groups might be overlooked, maintaining existing inequalities in health and social care.

What the changes mean

Applicants will now be required to demonstrate how inclusion is being built into all stages of the research lifecycle. This includes, but is not limited to:

- the research question and design
- the participants recruited
- the research methods
- data collections
- analysis
- dissemination of findings

There will be a significant emphasis on how participant selection is considered. Applicants will provide details of how their research contributes towards NIHR's mission to reduce health and care inequalities and how it expands on existing evidence. This will be a costed section of the award that must be accounted for.

Dr Gail Marzetti, Director of the Science, Research and Evidence directorate in the Department of Health and Social Care, said: "Inclusive research is vital to tackling health and care inequalities, in the UK and globally. By requiring that NIHR research is inclusive at every stage, we hope to increase both the quality of our evidence and the number of people able to benefit from research, so that more people can lead active, healthy lives. This contributes to the wider mission of [building a fairer Britain](#) (.PDF)

Thank you for your selection

You can now hide this message or find out more about cookies.

[Hide](#) [More info](#)

In preparation for today's launch, we have spent the last few months actively engaging with key stakeholders. We've held training sessions with hundreds of research applicants, NIHR committee members and peer reviewers.

The training was co-led by colleagues at the [NIHR Research Support Service \(/node/48001\)](/node/48001). They can offer more detailed support to all England-based applicants, as well as applicants from devolved countries who are working in collaboration with English partners.

If you missed any of the training or would like to refresh your knowledge, you can find links [in the Guidance \(/about-us/who-we-are/research-inclusion/funding-application-guidance\)](/about-us/who-we-are/research-inclusion/funding-application-guidance).

Next steps

This requirement applies to all new domestic programme awards from today. Over the next 18 months, we will also introduce this as a condition for Global Health and Infrastructure awards.

We will also monitor how research teams deliver on their inclusive research plans throughout the life of the award. Ensuring the research we fund serves everyone, is crucial to our mission to improve the health and wealth of the nation through research.

Next year, we will be publishing our sex and gender policy. We will provide specific training nearer the time about how to account for these in applications.

You are reading

Inclusion now a key condition for NIHR funding

Latest news

[See all news \(/news\)](/news)

(/news/new-research-partnership-tackle-drug-and-alcohol-addiction)



News

New research partnership to tackle drug and alcohol addiction

12 September 2025

Thank you for your selection

You can now hide this message or find out more about cookies.



News

Drones could deliver defibrillators to cardiac arrest patients in the UK

8 September 2025

(/news/promising-new-drug-people-stubborn-high-blood-pressure)



News

Promising new drug for people with stubborn high blood pressure

5 September 2025

Sign up to our newsletters

Keep up to date with our latest news, events and funding opportunities.

[Sign up now \(/newsletters\)](/newsletters)

Thank you for your selection

You can now hide this message or find out more about cookies.