

## Adopting Innovation

### Frequently asked questions

#### How do I apply?

You can complete an expression of interest through the [link on our website](#). You will first be asked to register for our applicant portal. Expressions of interest close at 12.00 (midday) on 11 November.

#### How will you be assessing applications? What are the criteria?

We will be assessing expressions of interest based on the criteria set out in the [Call for applications](#).

#### What can the funding be spent on?

We have set out a list of what the funding can and cannot be spent on page 27 and 28 of the [Call for applications](#). If there is something you don't think is covered by this list, please do [get in touch](#) and we will be happy to answer your question.

#### What do you mean by in-kind support and funding?

In-kind support or contributions can be the key to ensuring the long-term sustainability of the hub. For the expression of interest we are asking that you ensure that there will be local support for the hub in the form of in-kind support and/or funding.

At the full application phase we will be asking you to share a proposed hub budget which will need to include some forms of in-kind support and/or funding.

Examples of in-kind support include:

- current roles at the trust supporting the hub, for example the trust's QI team may support the adaptation of an innovation, and share their co-production expertise
- work and event space for the hub
- time from senior leaders in the organisation to support and provide leadership to the hub.

#### Where will the hubs be based?

Hubs will be hosted within NHS provider organisations. We don't expect the hubs to be new entities in their own right, instead we expect them to build on existing improvement expertise and infrastructure in provider organisations. We would expect the hubs to form partnerships in their localities as described on page 9 of the [Call for applications](#), in order to bring in wider expertise, experience and skills around the problems they choose to focus on and the innovations they adopt as a result.

We encourage a variety of providers to apply: this may include health boards; acute, tertiary, mental health or community health NHS trusts; and also smaller district general hospitals.

## What level of patient and public involvement are you expecting during the application phase?

This is not a set requirement in the expression of interest phase but we would see it as very advantageous if applicants are thinking about it early on; as outlined earlier, co-production is one of the principles we have set out for hubs to work to. At a minimum, in the expression of interest we want to see that applicants have a good sense of patient need in their local area. For example, what might be some of the challenges for your local population that existing innovations could help address?

If successful in later stages of the application process, we would be wanting to understand how applicants will involve patients and the public in the hub in more detail – both to set priorities for the hub to work on and then in how the hub engages patients and the public in the process of local adaptation.

## What kind of innovation are you looking for?

While it will be important for us to understand your local system needs and challenges, and get a sense of potential innovations that might be adopted by your hub, it is not the innovation ideas on which we will be making our selections. The primary purpose of our funding is to develop centres of expertise and support within NHS provider organisations to help them become better adopters. In our selection process we will be looking for applications that demonstrate how they will bring partnerships together to create environments at a local level to take on existing innovations.

The focus of this programme is on the spread of existing innovation rather than the generation of new innovations. We have sometimes referred to innovation as “new approaches, practices, treatments, technologies and services that aim to improve health care”.

We want hubs to work with innovations that have potential for wider scale, and have been trialled elsewhere – this is about adapting these ideas and innovations to work effectively in their new context.

As outlined in the [Call for applications](#), we won't fund costs of product and/or technology development as a primary focus – we will fund time associated with adapting existing technology to their context, but not the cost of the technology itself.

## How do you expect hubs to identify existing innovations?

Once hubs have gone through a prioritisation and problem definition process, we would expect that the hubs will work with their partners to help identify existing innovations that have the potential to help tackle their agreed area for improvement. One of the mandatory partners for the hubs is a regional or national health care improvement or innovation body; we see this as a likely avenue for horizon scanning and identification of applicable innovations.

## Are applications from social care welcome?

We would welcome social care as partners in an application, but the lead applicant would need to be an NHS provider. Hubs should have a primary focus on health care but we would expect that some of the innovations that hubs are adopting, and the challenges they are

tackling, will cross over into social care – so social care organisations could be valuable partners.

## How are you defining NHS providers?

We are defining NHS providers to be:

- in England – acute, tertiary, mental health or community health NHS trusts
- in Scotland – integration joint board
- in Wales – health boards
- in Northern Ireland – health and social care trusts.

We would expect NHS providers as outlined in the [Call for applications](#) to partner with others in the system as described and appropriate for your locality, for example primary care and voluntary sector organisations.

We would expect primary care to be a key partner for the hubs, for example in England clinical commissioning groups, GP federations and primary care networks. Our expectation is that the hub would be hosted within the local NHS trust, in order to draw on more established infrastructure, for example physical space for the hub staff to work in, and capability/expertise such as transformation and improvement.

## How do the third sector and industry/private sector fit into this?

The third/voluntary/community sector can play an important role as partners to the hubs funded through this programme – offering expertise alongside links to the community, enabling effective co-production. The private sector can offer expertise and innovation – on an appropriate basis. Our focus is on the adopters in this programme, rather than the generation of new innovation itself.

## How does this differ from AHSNs?

The hubs funded through this programme will be complementary to the great work that Academic Health Science Networks (AHSNs) do in England. AHSNs will be key partners to any hub in England. In Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, partnerships will be with other regional or national improvement or innovation bodies and full details on this aspect are included in the [Call for applications](#).

In England, hubs will be hosted within NHS providers (either individual providers or partnerships of NHS providers) and work in partnership with the local AHSN. We took the decision to host hubs in provider organisations so that they are working as close to the front line as possible and are well positioned to address the practical and organisational-culture related barriers to adopting innovation that exist in health care organisations. These are barriers that AHSNs are not in a position to address alone. Our previous research on the adoption of innovation showed us that investment in capacity and skills for adoption at the front line is needed and we have used this research to design this programme. The AHSN network is actively [supporting](#) this programme.

## Will there be one hub in each nation of the UK?

The Health Foundation is committed to funding work across the UK. We strongly encourage applications from across the UK, but we will not be limiting the final hub selection to one hub per nation – we will be assessing over the range of criteria outlined in the [Call for applications](#). Applications that most strongly meet the criteria will be selected.