

Notes for applicants

Advancing Applied Analytics Round 2

A Health Foundation call for projects that improve analytical capability in support of better health and care

26 March 2018

The Health Foundation
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www.health.org.uk

NOTE: All applications for the Advancing Applied Analytics have to be submitted through our online application portal **AIMS.health.org.uk**. We advise all potential applicants to familiarise themselves **as early as possible** with the application process.

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About the Health Foundation

The Health Foundation is an independent charity committed to bringing about better health and health care for people in the UK.

Our aim is a healthier population, supported by high quality health care that can be equitably accessed. We learn what works to make people's lives healthier and improve the health care system. From giving grants to those working at the front line to carrying out research and policy analysis, we shine a light on how to make successful change happen.

We make links between the knowledge we gain from working with those delivering health and health care and our research and analysis. Our aspiration is to create a virtuous circle, using what we know works on the ground to inform effective policymaking and vice versa.

We believe good health and health care are key to a flourishing society. Through sharing what we learn, collaborating with others and building people's skills and knowledge, we aim to make a difference and contribute to a healthier population.

Further details about the organisation can be found at www.health.org.uk.

About our Advancing Applied Analytics programme

The ability to use information effectively is an essential element in any health care system. Analysis can help shape care for individual patients as well as informing decisions for services or across organisations and health systems. It also has a role in helping to improve quality and safety by identifying areas for improvement and monitoring service delivery.

Therefore, modern health care systems require a skilled workforce that is able to prepare, analyse and interpret data for a range of purposes. However, as we know from the Health Foundation's recent review published in December 2016, [*Understanding analytical capability in health care*](#), analytical capability is underdeveloped in the NHS. It is widely acknowledged that health care services cannot access the right type of analysis or make the best use of data that already exist, never mind take advantage of new data streams and methods that are becoming possible.

The review we published in December 2016 described some of the limitations of analytical capability in support of health and care. Good analytical support is important at all levels of the health service – it can help shape care for individual patients as well as across organisations and health systems. It has a role in supporting efforts to improve the quality and safety of care by identifying areas for improvement and monitoring change. Perhaps most importantly, good quality analysis is central to learning health care systems and has been shown to be a vital aspect of high performing organisations.

The Health Foundation is therefore interested in stimulating projects that can help to improve analytical capability in support of health and care services. We are looking to support local

projects and initiatives that can demonstrate how to improve analytical capability and provide lessons for the wider care system.

In 2017, we piloted the first round of our Advancing Applied Analytics programme and we funded 12 projects. To find out more about these projects, visit:

www.health.org.uk/advancing-applied-analytics

This is the second round of the programme and we have up to £750,000 of funding. We are looking to support good quality projects that:

- improve analytical capability and can show how this will support better care in the future
- require funding of up to a maximum of £75,000 per project
- start no later than October 2018, with a maximum duration of 15 months
- are led by a local/regional NHS or social care provider or commissioning organisation including local authorities, though partnerships with other groups and sectors are welcome.

The projects – what we are looking to support

This programme is aimed at helping health and social care organisations and systems make better use of structured methods and information to support decision making. This could be at any level of the health and social care system, from decisions about caring for individuals to board level strategies.

At this stage, we are not focusing on specific themes but are willing to consider applications from a broad range of areas, provided these can demonstrate improvements in analytical capability. We are especially interested in projects that address the capability deficiencies identified in the [Understanding analytical capability in health care](#) report. For example:

- better understand and structure the problems faced by managers/clinicians
- access and understand the evidence and information that can be brought to bear on a problem
- apply appropriate and robust methods to manipulate information and data
- communicate findings accurately and clearly.

The following table includes some examples of projects funded under Round 1 of this programme. More details on all the Advancing Applied Analytics projects are available on our website: www.health.org.uk/advancing-applied-analytics. These are examples of the types of projects we envisage – at this stage in the development of this programme, we are open to a broad set of ideas, provided they satisfy a basic set of criteria (see page 8 for selection criteria).

Table 1 Examples of projects from Advancing Applied Analytics Round 1

Project/scheme	Examples of Advancing Applied Analytics Round 1 projects
<p>Developing new measures and tools to assess the quality of health care, including efficiency (NHS Midlothian).</p>	<p>Building an analytical framework around the Electronic Frailty Index to transform care for people living with frailty The Electronic Frailty Index (eFI) developed by the NIHR CLAHRC uses General Practice read codes to identify frailty in the practice population. This proposal will use analytical capacity and quality improvement methodology to develop an analytical framework around the eFI which spans primary care, community health and care and hospital services.</p>
<p>Programmes aimed at specific learning and development within the analytical community and/or with senior managers/clinicians. Applying new analytical methods to inform improvement activity.</p>	<p>Applied Analytics Development Programme The focus of the Applied Analytics Development Programme is on building relationships between professional communities across a health economy footprint to better understand and structure problems faced by managers and clinicians outside of individual service or organisational perspectives. The approach brings to bear all the advantages system wide, community and peer learning brings in terms of accessing, understanding and sharing evidence and methodologies that can be applied to a 'burning' issue. By developing this whole system view and supporting the growth of technical skills and experience at the same time as creating health economy wide analytical networks, we are proposing to create an economy-wide environment that is conducive to analytical innovation and more effective communication of new solutions.</p>
<p>Developing analysis that span whole populations. Examples of good practice in combining analytical approaches.</p>	<p>Developing a community of practice around capacity planning for the Kent & Medway STP To date, a number of internal & external partners have carried out demand and capacity planning in support of the STP using varying methodologies and assumptions and generating outputs which can be too high level and not sufficiently generalisable (eg workforce planning) for long term complex systems planning. Funding will be used to pump prime the development of a local community of practice (COP). Its main aim will be to oversee the development, validation and use of a set of activity, finance and workforce models (using systems dynamics (SD) methodology) that will underpin a consistent dynamic approach towards STP demand and capacity planning.</p>

It is important that projects are conducted in a way that builds analytical capability within health care organisations and systems. The Health Foundation's report outlined a number of different approaches to improve analytical capability including:

1. Supporting professional and personal development and training where the focus is on the better application of analysis.
2. Supporting analytical networks and opportunities for learning and sharing about new approaches and methods.
3. Investing in analytical tools and methods that make best use of the available workforce and help develop new skills.
4. Encouraging cross-organisational working and collaboration to mitigate the problems caused by fragmented communities of analysts. For example:
 - Creating roles/teams that span organisations.
 - Creating environments for innovation and dissemination new methods.
 - Developing new relationships with experts.
5. Stimulating demand for analysis. There are a number of strategies that can help reinforce the value of analytics at a local level. These might include:
 - Ways to help prove the value of analytics.
 - Developing tools for auditing analytical development.
 - Raising awareness of the value of better analytics as part of existing management development initiatives.

Scale of the awards

Our aim is to develop a programme that covers a variety of different projects within the field of applied analytics. We have set an **upper limit** for this programme in terms of the length of time for projects and the amount of funding available, which is:

- a maximum award value of £75,000 per project
- a maximum duration of 15 months
- starting no later than October 2018.

Please note this does not mean that all applications need to be at this maximum level. If we receive good quality applications that require smaller resources or could be delivered in a shorter time scale, we will be pleased to consider them.

Your application should include all expected items of direct expenditure required to carry out the project. We expect that the majority of funding will be spent on the direct costs covering staff (employee, advisor or researcher) time spent on projects, which can include staff who are already employed at the institution or new staff. Other items commonly covered include travel costs for meetings, relevant conferences, data analysis support, transcription of interviews and focus groups, venue hire/refreshments for research meetings/focus groups, travel costs for patient and health and social care staff to attend focus groups.

Please note that as a charity we will fund only the full directly incurred costs of the project. We do not fund overheads. Furthermore, the project will be supported as a charitable grant and as such is not liable for VAT.

There are also some items that **the Health Foundation will not fund** including:

- Large items of equipment (over £2,000) including scanners, printers, IT hardware, etc.
- Capital expenditure such as for vehicles or building acquisition or refurbishment.
- Costs of traditional research or laboratory-based activities.
- Organisational overheads such as costs of premises, management and HR.
- Procurement of day-to-day consumables or of 'business-as-usual' equipment.
- General conference attendance if you will be attending only as opposed to using the conference to present findings from your project and spread learning.

The applications – which organisations can apply?

The Advancing Applied Analytics programme is open to applicants from across the UK. The lead organisation must provide, commission, support or deliver health services free at the point of care in primary, secondary or tertiary care, or across boundaries such as health care and social care. If a non-NHS provider of health services, the organisation must be commissioned, or in an authorised position, to provide these services through the appropriate channels across the UK (eg registered with the Care Quality Commission in England). These providers must be able to demonstrate that more than 50% of their work is with NHS-funded or local authority funded patients.

Please note lead applicants already in receipt of a current award will not be eligible to apply as a lead applicant ie you can only be the lead on one project at any one time. However, an organisation or individual currently in receipt of an Advancing Applied Analytics award may be a partner on another's application.

Subject to these requirements, lead organisations could include the following organisations:

- Voluntary sector organisations
- Clinical commissioning groups
- Local authorities
- Health boards
- Hospital and community health care providers
- Social care providers such as care homes
- Independent sector providers where majority of care is NHS, local authority funded
- GP practices/federations
- Commissioning support units

Please note at this stage our focus is on supporting local teams so we would exclude applications led by national organisations with a remit to cover all of England, Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland – though they are welcome to work in partnership with a local agency.

Some applicants may apply as a partnership of organisations working together. Within such partnerships we expect one organisation to act as the 'lead applicant' or 'lead organisation' and the other organisation(s) as partners. The Health Foundation requires a lead organisation¹ to ensure that there is appropriate influence and governance over the project

¹ A lead organisation must have legally constituted status and governance protocols that allow it to legally contract for funding. It may be constituted as an NHS body, a 'not-for-profit' organisation (eg a charity or a

including the implementation of the innovation, management of the project and of the funding provided by the Health Foundation. We will contract with the lead organisation which will be responsible for creating and monitoring any subcontracts with its partners.

We strongly recommend that lead applicants are only involved in one application or in a small number of very different applications. We will only accept one application per project lead and all applications will be expected to have **senior/board level executive support** for their application from the outset. We are seeking to support a diverse range of projects so are unlikely to support more than one project submitted by the same executive team.

In addition to the organisations listed in the lead applicant section applications may include a wide range of partner organisations including academics, non-NHS providers including voluntary organisations, evaluation and research organisations etc.

Partnerships may be newly established for the purpose of the application but should be able to demonstrate commitment to collaboration and that appropriate governance processes are in place to support delivery. Where a private company or a profit-making organisation is involved as a partner, we would not expect more than 50% of our funding to go to these partners either directly or indirectly. Partner organisations may be involved in up to three applications and, if shortlisted, will need to discuss with the interview panel the feasibility of being involved in multiple projects.

Selection criteria

We are interested in supporting innovative and ambitious projects with the potential to substantially enhance analytical capability in support of better health and care services.

When selecting projects, we will look for evidence of:

1. The application of novel or innovative analytical methods or approaches applied to population health or care delivery. Where new methods are being applied we will look for robust methodologies that will improve the quality of analysis used to support decisions. Projects must identify activities that are outside of routine day to day work.
2. A commitment to generating findings that have wider applicability beyond one organisation and sharing the project's learning with others.
3. The extent to which the application addresses one or more of the key areas for improving capability: (1) better understand and structure the problems faced by managers or clinicians; (2) access and understand the evidence and information that can be brought to bear on a problem; (3) apply appropriate and robust methods to manipulate information and data; or (4) communicate findings accurately and clearly.

company limited by guarantee), a social enterprise, an alliance, a federation, a company limited by shares, or a community interest organisation. If the constitution allows the lead organisation to make a profit, the Health Foundation would have to be convinced that it is not supporting private profit making companies delivering only a small benefit to the NHS. Where a 'not-for-profit' organisation has another arm that is profit making, the Health Foundation would need to be convinced that our funding is going to the non-profit-making arm. We will not accept applications from organisations based outside the UK, individuals or sole traders.

4. A clear demonstration of how the work will improve analytical capability in ways that will ultimately lead to improved care/population health. Though these projects are about building analytical capability we need to be able to understand the logic of how the project will eventually impact on health or social care or population health in the longer term.
5. The feasibility and practicality of the proposed projects and the likelihood of delivering anticipated outputs within the timescales and resources proposed. We want to fund projects that are deliverable and demonstrate a good understanding of key risks and an awareness of mitigation. We may also take into account the track records of the organisation in delivery of other Health Foundation programmes or contracts.
6. Experience of the project team in delivering high quality projects, though not necessarily a history of delivering projects within grant funded environments. We will consider the past experience of key personnel within the team, including their ability to implement new ideas; the strength of their analytical skills; the commitment of the relevant organisations; and the expert support available.
7. Permissions: Applications that require additional research and/or ethical approval must indicate that they already have (or will be able to get) the necessary permissions to start the project by October 2018. The Health Foundation will require written assurance that relevant approvals are either not necessary or have been sought and granted as part of the formal agreement process before funding will be released.
8. Support from key stakeholders within the organisation and the engagement of appropriately qualified partners for the project.
9. Clear local commitment to the dissemination and sharing of findings of the project. Each plan must outline how the findings of the work will impact on practice in their own organisation and what steps they intend to take to share findings with others. We would encourage dissemination in a range of approaches, not necessarily lengthy reports or academic papers. We would expect grant holders to engage with wider analytical community to present their work.
10. We will prefer those projects that are not suitable for other current Health Foundation programmes.

Table 2 draws out some observation from our reviews process in the first round of Advancing Applied Analytics. These are not hard and fast rules about what make for a successful application – but they are offered as potentially useful pointers.

Table 2 Observations on successful applications in Advancing Applied Analytics Round 1

There were some common themes in applications that were not successful:

- The proposal was too close to an activity that was considered to be work that, while laudable, was considered fairly routine in other organisations. So, applications will need to show what proposal is additional to business as usual.
- Balance of expenditure going to external organisations (consultants or academics). Though we recognise these projects do need to spend some money 'bringing people in' – we wanted to be assured that there was a transfer of skills to in house staff and some prospects of sustainable change.
- “Building a better mousetrap – but without indicating how that would be used”. Some projects fell into the category of technical or specialist developments where the application to routine practice/decision making was not clear. The idea of applied analytics is important to this scheme so we are looking for projects that translate into practical change in the health and care system. For example, if it's a new visualisation - who will use it and how?
- Evidence of engagement with the right range of partners. There are no hard and fast rules but we tended to look less favourably on applications that were felt to be too narrowly focussed on a single organisation, department or professional group when the application of the work impacted on a wider set of potential stakeholders.
- Demonstrate that you can access the data needs for the project. We know that accessing some forms of data can take a long time and do not want to make awards to organisations that cannot deliver this basic step within a reasonable time frame. We therefore favour applications where we feel this will not be a problem.

We would also point to a number of aspects that were looked on kindly by reviewers:

- We looked favourably on those applications that costed what they wanted to do and bid for funds under the maximum amount of funding. It was nice to see teams working out what they would need to deliver a project – rather than cramming in things up to the maximum £75,000. The themes of taking analytics through to application meant that we tended to like those projects that explicitly engaged with senior staff in an organisation. As well as helping with implementation we feel this also helps to articulate the value of good analytics and create demand for the right sort of analysis in future.
- Projects that explicitly sought to develop lessons/tools that had wider applicability and could be shared with others.
- Having the right range of skills/experience. Very often the key to unlocking analytical capability is about developing better ways to access expertise. It is important that the skills available to undertake the project match the aspirations for the work.

The process – what to expect when applying

Applicants must complete an **online application form at [AIMS.health.org.uk](https://www.health.org.uk)**. We would ask that you familiarise yourself with the online application portal at the earliest possible stage of your application as we may not be able to respond in a timely fashion to any technical queries as the deadline for applications nears. We strongly encourage early proposal submission to avoid any disappointment.

Please note the application form is a general one that is being used on all Health Foundation programmes. The questions are generic and you will need to read the ***Application form guidance*** for specific advice and guidance to help you apply for the Advancing Applied Analytics programme. You can download the guidance from our website at: www.health.org.uk/advancing-applied-analytics

To assist in preparing your applications, a ***Frequently asked questions*** document is available for download: www.health.org.uk/advancing-applied-analytics

The deadline to submit applications is by **noon, Tuesday 1 May 2018**. The online application portal will not accept applications submitted after this time.

Applications will initially be assessed by staff at the Health Foundation plus some external reviewers. Those applications that do not fit the selection criteria of the programme will be rejected at this stage. We aim to have completed the first stage of reviewing by **Friday 8 June 2018**. Due to the volume of applications expected, we may not be able to provide detailed individual feedback at this stage.

A number of shortlisted applicants will be invited to undertake a telephone interview and to respond to specific questions linked to their application. These interview calls will take place from **Monday 9 July to Friday 13 July 2018** and applicants are asked to ensure they can be available within this timeframe.

The final decision on which projects will receive funding will be based on a panel discussion of internal and external experts. We anticipate all projects being notified by **Friday 27 July 2018** so that we can agree contracts by **September 2018** with target start dates by **October 2018**.

If you have any questions relating to the application process once you have read the ***Frequently asked questions*** and ***Application form guidance***, please send us an email at: applied.analytics@health.org.uk.

Project management and reporting

Projects should have a dedicated project lead that will be responsible for delivery and financial management of the work. As part of the application form we ask you to list specific outputs and milestones that will be used for monitoring progress of the project. These milestones must be capable of being measured or assessed unambiguously and form the basis for simple but robust progress reporting.

Interim reporting: Requirements for this will include:

- Updates to the Health Foundation mid-way through the project to review progress and discuss any issues arising. Some projects may also require additional contact with an individual from the Health Foundation with a special interest in the topic. We will finalise these arrangements as contracts are prepared.
- Summary financial statements at the mid-point and upon completion of the project. We will expect budget reconciliation at the end of the project, signed off by the authorised finance officer in your organisation. Any unspent funds must be returned to the Health Foundation. If costs change over the funding period or if unanticipated costs arise this can be discussed with the Health Foundation. We are unlikely to approve any additional funds.

Information Governance: We expect all projects to conform to national standard of information governance and to take all the necessary steps in assuring data security. We may ask to see additional information, including Privacy Impact Assessment on selected projects. We cannot award or continue to support projects where these basic assurances are not in place and this will be recognised in our contract with you.

Participation in joint workshops: We will establish regular six-monthly workshops for successful applicants. These will be used as an opportunity for us to keep in touch with projects and to share learning between them. We may also adapt the agenda to include external presentations and link with a wider community of people interested in applied analysis. The funding provided should be used to pay for travel (and associated expenses) for up to three project team members at any event.

Final reporting: The final outputs from the projects can take a number of forms. Though we will require some form of a short written report at the end of the project, we recognise that there may be much better ways to share the learning from this work, for example, in presentations, joint meetings or shared products. What's most important to us is that projects influence what happens within their organisation(s) and there are attempts to share learning. We will therefore ask in advance that all projects include an outline of how the work will impact on practice within their own organisations and what steps they will take to share findings with other organisation.

Payments: As will be detailed in the award agreement, funding will be made available through phased payments to the lead organisation throughout the project, subject to satisfactory progress of the work. The lead organisation will be responsible for administering the financial aspects of the award to the partner organisations. We advise partnership applications to agree internal payment processes and mechanisms at the point of application.

Intellectual property

Any intellectual property generated from the Health Foundation's funding will be owned by the organisations delivering the project, but must be licensed to the Health Foundation to support its charitable objectives. Applicants might find it beneficial to discuss how intellectual property will be shared by the project team organisations during the application stage.

Key dates

Activity	Date
Open for applications	Monday 26 March 2018
Deadline for applications	Noon, Tuesday 1 May 2018
Applicants shortlisted by	Monday 11 June 2018
Telephone interviews for shortlisted applicants	Monday 11 July to Friday July 2018
Applicants informed of final decision	Friday 27 July
Contracts agreed by	September 2018
Indicative start dates	October 2018