

# Frequently asked questions

*The economic and social value of health research programme*

*Updated on 7 August 2017*

**A Health Foundation open call for innovative research on the economic and social value of health in the UK**

**NOTE:** All applications to the economic and social value of health research programme have to be submitted through our online application portal <https://aims.health.org.uk>. We advise all potential applicants to familiarise themselves as early as possible with the application process. The process is outlined in this FAQ document as well as in the AIMS user manual.

**The deadline for applications is 12.00 midday on 29 September 2017.**

The Health Foundation  
Tel 020 7257 8000  
[www.health.org.uk](http://www.health.org.uk)

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## Eligibility

### **Q1. Who is allowed to submit proposals? Is it just universities?**

The economic and social value of health research programme is an open award programme. Any organisation that can demonstrate the necessary skills and experience to carry out high quality research within the remit of the programme can submit a proposal.

### **Q2. Does the lead applicant need to be UK-based?**

No, we will accept proposals from researchers based outside of the UK and for collaborations with non-UK based researchers. However, the research must clearly relate to UK datasets and be for the benefit of people in the UK.

### **Q3. Can my proposal have partner organisations?**

Yes, applicants can collaborate or subcontract, where appropriate, with partner organisations. However, we need one organisation to be the lead organisation for the purposes of the online application, the contracting and project management processes. Please specify what role any partners will have and indicate the current level of progress in developing the collaboration in your application.

### **Q4. Can two individuals, working for separate institutions, act as co-principal investigators?**

We welcome applications from multi-disciplinary and multi-site teams with one or more co-principal investigator(s). However, for the purposes of the online application, the contracting and the project management processes, we require you to have only one named primary/lead contact, and that person must be ultimately responsible for the delivery of the research.

## Budgeting and research costs

### **Q5. How long will the Health Foundation's funding last for this research?**

We anticipate making awards for projects lasting up to 36 months. However, we expect that some projects will last considerably less than this.

You will need to be explicit in your application about how much time you need and the rationale for that time.

### **Q6. Will the funding begin from grant announcement or from the start of the research programme?**

Funding will begin once the research starts and upon signing of a mutually agreed award agreement. Subsequent payments will be made contingent on agreed outputs, normally by way of annual and final award reports. It is anticipated that projects supported through these grants will begin in quarter one of 2018.

### **Q7. What is the funding that I can apply for?**

We anticipate funding a range of awards of between £150,000 and £350,000. In exceptional circumstances we may consider funding a research idea beyond our maximum of £350,000. You will, however, need to present an excellent case for this, based on the additional value and impact of the proposal.

**Q8. What costs can be included as ‘research costs’?**

You should include what you expect to be the items of direct expenditure required to carry out your research. 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 people to attend focus groups. You can include ‘honorarium’ payments for focus group participants.

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

**Q9. Can we include salary costs for academic staff working on the project, salary costs that are directly allocated not directly incurred?**

We expect that the majority of funding will be spent on the direct costs covering academic and/or researcher time spent on projects, which can include staff who are already employed at the institution or new staff (directly allocated cost and directly incurred cost). However, we do not provide funding for academic backfill or teaching replacement time, in addition to the direct cost.

**Q10. Do we cover staff with grant funding from elsewhere?**

Yes, provided their time on this project is clearly allocated and budgeted.

**Q11. Can we include the cost of PhD?**

Yes, in principle, but you must provide a sufficiently experienced team and also consider whether part-funding is possible.

**Q12. Can we include VAT from sub-contractors?**

Yes – but only the directly attributable VAT. You may want to consider whether you can achieve better value for money by including a non-commercial sub-contractor instead.

**Q13. Will the Health Foundation fund overheads?**

No. As a charity we will fund only the full directly incurred and directly allocated costs of the research.

**Q14. Can we include inflation in our costing?**

All costs would need to be covered as part of the overall budget, including any inflationary increases. However, as a charity we ask that future inflationary increases be based on the Retail Price Index as of April 2017. Please confirm in your application that this is the assumed inflation rate adopted in your budgeting.

**Q15. Do you pay VAT?**

No. The research will be supported as a charitable grant and as such is not liable for VAT.

**Q16. Would you be prepared to part-fund a research project?**

Yes, we have no objection to joint funding with an existing project or joint funder. You will need to provide details of when and from whom the rest of the funding is likely to be secured in your proposal. Prior to any funding decision we would need clarity about where

responsibility lay contractually in terms of research governance issues, intellectual property, publication and dissemination, etc.

## **Scope and focus of the research**

### **Q17. How do you define health?**

We define health as both physical and mental. We are interested in both objective and subjective measures of health, which may relate differentially to outcomes. Whether health as defined by physiological/biochemical measures, or as perceived by the individual, has the biggest impact on economic and social outcomes is an interesting and relevant question.

### **Q18. Do you include wellbeing in your definition of health?**

Researchers may wish to include wider 'wellbeing' as well as core health measures in their proposal, but this will not be a criterion for successful application.

### **Q19. Will you fund research into the impact of economic and social factors on health?**

The call will not fund research into the impact of economic and social factors on health. We do, however, recognise that a complex, dynamic inter-relationship exists between health and socio-economic outcomes, and there is the possibility that, for example, health may causally impact on an economic outcome in such a way that may in turn impact, either positively or negatively, on health.

### **Q20. Will you fund research into the impact of particular conditions on economic and social outcomes?**

We are not looking to fund research that focuses entirely on a single health condition, although a narrower focus may become necessary for exploration of mechanisms/pathways by which health impacts on socio-economic outcomes, for example, as these may differ between conditions.

### **Q21. Are you only interested in national-level studies?**

No, we are interested in local and national-level studies based on UK data.

If you have any questions about the eligibility of the data involved in your study, please contact us at: [TheEconomicAndSocialValueOfHealth@health.org.uk](mailto:TheEconomicAndSocialValueOfHealth@health.org.uk)

### **Q22. Will the economic and social value of health research programme fund methodological research?**

Yes, as part of your proposal; however, you must demonstrate how the methodological development can lead, directly or indirectly, to addressing the research aim to generate new knowledge that increases our understanding of the causal impact of individual health on economic and social outcomes. We do not expect methodological research to be the only focus of the proposal.

### **Q23. Will the economic and social value of health research programme fund evaluations of the return on investment of specific public health interventions?**

No, the programme will not fund this kind of evaluation. However, we are interested in the return on broader investment in good health on economic and social outcomes.

**Q24. Our research idea aligns closely to more than one of the Health Foundation's areas of interest – is this okay?**

Yes, we welcome research ideas that cross-cut areas of interest, and we would expect that work of this scope might touch on more than one of our areas of interest. Please be clear as to which area your proposal mainly focuses on.

**Q25. Do I need to address all the areas of interest or would it suffice to address just one?**

The research does not need to focus on all the areas of interest set out in the guidance, but proposals must be strongly relevant to at least one of the areas. Please be clear as to which area your proposal mainly focuses on.

However, we are prepared to fund other high risk/high impact applications addressing different questions related to the economic and social value of health, where they have the potential to make a strong contribution to improving health or potential policy impact.

**Q26. Do I need to have obtained ethical and data access approvals for my proposal prior to submitting my application?**

No, not at the time of submitting your application. However, you should allow time to obtain the relevant approvals in your proposal. The application form asks that you carefully consider data access in your project timelines; please ensure that you answer this section of the form thoroughly.

**Q27. I'm very clear about the outputs from my research in the early part of my proposed programme but there may be a number of different options and avenues of investigation that may emerge as the research progresses – is this okay?**

Yes. Particularly for a larger award, we expect that some research programmes, outputs and trajectories for investigation will be contingent on emerging findings from the initial stages of the research. You should be clear in your proposal where this is likely and illustrate in as much detail as possible the range of potential lines of enquiry that may emerge. We believe that such flexibility allows us and the researchers to maximise the impact of their work. Successful applicants will be required to attend a Health Foundation assembled advisory group and this will be your opportunity to present your case for refining lines of investigation during the grant period.

**Q28. Are you looking to fund clinical research?**

No, we do not fund clinical or drug efficacy research, including clinical trials.

**The application process**

**Q29. I've applied to the Health Foundation for funding before and have not had to use an online system. Can I submit a proposal any other way?**

No, only applications submitted through our new online application portal <https://aims.health.org.uk> will be considered for assessment. We would ask that you familiarise yourself with the online application portal at an early stage of your application as we may not be able to respond to any technical queries in a timely fashion in the days prior to the deadline for applications. We are encouraging early proposal submission to avoid any

disappointment. The key documents supporting the application process are this FAQ and the associated [AIMS user manual](#).

The application form can be downloaded as a Word file, making it possible to work on your application remotely; however, you are required to make your final submission through the online system. Please note that tables, diagrams or mathematical formulas do not always neatly cut and paste into the online portal and should be submitted as attachments.

### **Q30. Who should be the primary contact on the application?**

The primary contact (including the email address) on your application will be the person who will receive all future communication and correspondence with regards to your application. We are advising that irrespective of who submits the online application, the primary contact (and their email address) should be the principal investigator or another person responsible for the overall delivery of the proposed research programme. It is critical that this person has the capacity to check and respond to their emails in a timely fashion as this is the way in which the Health Foundation will communicate the progress of your application.

### **Q31. Should I apply for the economic and social value of health research programme as an individual or an organisation?**

When using the online application portal, you must apply to the research programme as an **organisation**, not an individual.

When starting the application process, you will be asked first to register as a user. When doing this, ensure that you tick the 'with an organisation' box before you click 'register'. Once logged in, please ensure that you create an organisation (this and your individual details will then be linked to your new account). You may then start to create an application in the organisation's name. This is the only way to apply to the research programme. If you cannot find the scheme in the 'create application' drop down menu, it will be because you are trying to create an application on behalf of yourself as an individual, rather than the organisation.

Please note that the email you register and apply with will receive all communication regarding your application, so please ensure you have registered with the most appropriate email address.

### **Q32. Can I submit more than one proposal?**

Yes, you are welcome to submit more than one proposal; however, you will need to demonstrate clearly that you have the capacity to undertake more than one research programme if successful. In this case, an application will have the same organisation but may have the same or different lead applicants.

### **Q33. I'm having problems completing my online form, what should I do?**

In the first instance, please check that you have completed all the mandatory fields in the online form. It might be helpful to take a written note or screenshot of which questions require review before you re-enter the form.

If this has not resolved your problem, please refer to the [AIMS user manual](#). If you have a technical issue, eg problems with registering and logging in or confusing error messages, please email [AIMS@health.org.uk](mailto:AIMS@health.org.uk) and we will aim to reply within five working days.

If, however, you have queries about the actual programme or the application process which have not been answered in these FAQs, please email:

[theeconomicandsocialvalueofhealth@health.org.uk](mailto:theeconomicandsocialvalueofhealth@health.org.uk) and we will aim to reply within five working days and, if appropriate, will also update the FAQs document.

**Q34. Some of the questions have a character limit. Do these character limits include or exclude references?**

The character limit refers only to the question response box, and excludes references. There is a separate section on the online application form that allows you to include references for certain questions; these have no maximum character count.

**Q35. Do you have a preferred referencing style?**

The Health Foundation uses Vancouver style; however, you are free to use a style of your choice.

**Q36. Can we include additional material, such as letters of support where the data being used are not normally available for research purposes or where such data are being linked, as an appendix?**

No. In the interest of fairness, we discourage applicants from submitting applications of different volume and therefore no appendices are allowed. However, there are some questions on the online form where we allow the option to attach a file. Please note that in all cases the file type and size are restricted and we will discard any attachments that have not been asked for.

**Q37. Will I be able to get feedback on my application if it has been unsuccessful?**

Proposals that are successful in progressing to the peer review stage of assessment will receive the anonymised peer reviewer feedback. All research teams that we interview will have the opportunity for verbal feedback. Unfortunately, as we expect interest to be high in this call, we do not have the resources to provide feedback to the other unsuccessful proposals (ie those that were unsuccessful in getting to peer review stage).

## **Management and communication**

**Q38. If successful, when is it expected that research will begin, and when is the earliest that funds would be made available?**

We expect projects funded through the open call to begin, at the latest, by the end of quarter one of 2018. We will come to an agreement with each research team on the exact scheduling of the award payments as part of the finalisation of the research protocol and contracting process. Generally speaking, the first payment for a grant agreement is made soon after signing of the grant agreement.

**Q39. What is the Health Foundation's approach to the management of the research grants, and requirements for reporting and engagement while the research is being carried out?**

We are an engaged funder, and are interested in working with the successful research teams to understand and support their work while it is ongoing. Staff from our Research Directorate and elsewhere in the organisation may be interested in meeting with the successful research teams, and will be available to support and advise on the write-up of the findings. We expect successful research teams to keep us updated on their progress, including through annual and final grant reports.



In line with Health Foundation policy, an advisory board will be established to support the stewardship of the research programme. Awardees of grants of £250,000 and over will be expected to attend advisory board meetings which will be held at least twice a year throughout the life of the programme. Management of smaller grants will be fixed on an individual basis, but there is an expectation that award holders will attend at least one advisory group meeting during the life of the project.

For all grants, each project team will be expected to establish an advisory group to guide delivery of the project against agreed milestones.

#### **Q40. Who owns the intellectual property rights from the research?**

Our grant agreements are constructed so that you would own the rights to the intellectual property but you would license the Health Foundation to be able to use the intellectual property. This is so that we can, in partnership with the researchers, help support dissemination of the research and maximise impact in line with our charitable objectives.

#### **Q41. What are the Health Foundation's expectations regarding publication and dissemination of the findings from this research?**

We expect successful research teams to communicate the progress of their work from an early stage, and will be actively seeking to build linkages and share information where appropriate between the teams funded through this programme.

The formal outputs from each project will be an annual award report, an end of award report and a final research report. We would also expect award holders to publish their work in academic journals and to present their work at meetings and conferences. The Health Foundation has a policy of supporting open access publication fees for strategically relevant publications. These are decided on an individual basis and as such, we ask that applicants do not include the cost of open access publishing in their proposals.

The audience for this research is broad and includes: senior officials in government departments responsible for key areas of economic and social policy; the national, regional and local policy and academic research community; commissioners; and third sector organisations that work on economic and social policy. We expect research funded through this programme to be widely disseminated, especially through leading peer review journals and conferences. We would also encourage researchers to consider innovative methods of dissemination where appropriate.

#### **Q42. How important is the policy relevance of the research?**

Successful applications must be policy relevant and have the potential to have an impact on policy. Teams are expected to be able and prepared to work with us to engage with, and influence, policymakers. Applicants must demonstrate a good understanding of the policy landscape.