

# **South West Integrated Clinical Academic (ICA) Programme**

**HEE-NIHR Pre-doctoral bridging  
award (2021/22)**

**Guidance notes**

**For further information contact: [ICA.HEESW@uwe.ac.uk](mailto:ICA.HEESW@uwe.ac.uk)**

## Introduction

Health Education England (HEE) and the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) have established an overarching Integrated Clinical Academic (ICA) programme for non-medical healthcare professionals.

*‘Clinical academics are clinically active health researchers. They work in health and social care as clinicians to improve, maintain, or recover health while in parallel researching new ways of delivering better outcomes for the patients they treat and care for’*

*(Building a Research Career, NIHR 2015)*

The ICA programme is intended to increase research capacity in order to improve health and healthcare, by developing people with the potential and aspiration to become leading clinical academics and independent researchers in the future.

This year (2021/22) we have secured local funding to support a number of bridging awards for non-medical clinical academics between the Masters and Doctoral level. These awards offer the unique opportunity to develop an individualised, structured, six-month development plan. With their clinical academic supervisor, successful individuals will have the opportunity to design a bespoke educational programme tailored to suit their specific clinical academic needs and aspirations. The pre-doctoral bridging award is for those developing a doctoral fellowship application.

The awards can be completed on a full or part-time basis, as long as all costs remain within the maximum funding envelope of up to **£12,000**. Proposals should align their organisations research priorities and the HEE Mandate objectives.

Useful link:

<https://www.nihr.ac.uk/explore-nihr/academy-programmes/hee-nihr-integrated-clinical-academic-programme.htm>

## Eligibility

The awards are open to Allied Health Professionals, Chiropractors, Non-medical Public Health Speciality Trainees, Nurses, Midwives, Optometrists and Dispensing Opticians, Pharmacists and Pharmacy Technicians, Practitioner Psychologists, Healthcare Scientists and wider Dental Team Professions. To be eligible for one of these awards you will need to provide evidence that you have the following:

- Current registration with a relevant regulatory body as per ICA programme requirements (<https://www.nihr.ac.uk/documents/heenih-ica-programme-eligible-professions-and-regulators/12204>)
- Applicants must be employed by a provider of health and/or care services that is providing at least 50% of its services free at the point of delivery. The applicant must also be spending at least 50% of their current role delivering health and/or care services which are free at the point of delivery.

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- The health and/or care services are provided within the following STPs: Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly, Devon, Dorset, Somerset, Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire, Bath, Swindon and Wiltshire, and Gloucestershire.
- Two year's post-registration practice experience
- Applicants must hold a Master's level qualification or evidence of postgraduate study at Level 7
- Support from your line manager to undertake the award
- A keen interest and clear suitability for a clinical academic career
- Mentorship from a named clinical academic supervisor (identified by you)
- Access to a bespoke educational programme related to specific aspects of the research methodology or data analysis. This could include an academic module, a short course or further accredited academic training
- The opportunity to develop links with an existing clinical research team (identified by you)

If you have previously received a South West internship award, you may apply for this pre-doctoral award. Provide clear evidence of the outcomes of this award in your application. If you have applied previously for this award and been unsuccessful, you are welcome to apply again. You are expected to take up the award between 1<sup>st</sup> September 2021 and 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022 and to complete the award within 6 months. Requests for adjustments will be considered on an individual basis.

## How much is the award and how can the funding be used?

Each successful applicant will be awarded up to £12,000 to cover costs including salary backfill, incidental costs, research and clinical supervision, and formal education costs. Suggestions on how the budget can be spent are presented below;

**Clinical backfill:** it is recognised that this may form the main budget expenditure. The most appropriate backfill arrangements can be decided by the awardee and their line manager.

**Research project:** this could include expenses related to the applied research objectives e.g. patient and public involvement, digital voice records, reference management systems, dictation services etc.

**Academic supervision and formal teaching:** it is essential to have academic supervision throughout the award. Ideally this support should be from a University within the South West region, however it is recognised that some professional groups may have to find this support from outside of the region. It is recommended that academic supervision costs do not exceed 20% of the overall spending plan. Tailored support should allow award holders to develop a PhD

application. This could include, but is not limited to: refining a research question, methods, PPI plans and funding requirements, a systematic review as first author, engagement with a wider research project and contribution to authoring a paper, development of research leadership skills. Taught sessions or focused mentorship to support wider development as a clinical academic such as building a sustainable research career; dissemination of good practice; personal effectiveness and development of a research aware and active multi-professional workforce.

**Dissemination costs:** an element of the award is to disseminate the findings through publications and/or conference presentations. Therefore the award can be used to fund conference or publication costs. It is also anticipated that each successful applicant will produce a poster for HEE working across the south west.

**The amount awarded will be paid directly to the awardees employer.** It is recommended that the spending plans are checked by finance teams prior to submission.

## Monitoring and expectations

Successful applicants will be expected to attend two sessions with holders of Southwest ICA awards. The sessions will offer opportunities to engage with a peer group, review your progress and consider requirements for application to NIHR ICA awards. You will be required to present some elements of your award activity such as:

- Research proposal for review
- PPI review
- Doctoral fellowship allocation for review

A written progress report will be required after 3 months (maximum of 2 pages) to provide an update on progress with objectives, challenges and successes, any amendments to plans (where applicable) and priorities for the remaining period.

A final report will be completed at the end of the award (maximum of 4 pages) to provide a summary of achievement of objectives and outcomes, challenges and successes, financial summary and future plans.

## Application process:

You can arrange to get further information or advice about the award by emailing [ICA.HEESW@uwe.ac.uk](mailto:ICA.HEESW@uwe.ac.uk).

Prior to submitting an application, it is recommended that applicants contact the research leads within their NHS Trust to discuss applying for this award and investigate what support and help is available within the organisation. You will also require support from a clinical academic supervisor and some academic contacts for higher education institutes are included below.

Please submit a completed checklist (see Appendix 1) and all corresponding documentation to [ICA.HEESW@uwe.ac.uk](mailto:ICA.HEESW@uwe.ac.uk): by **Midday, Friday 28<sup>th</sup> May 2021**. Please include the checklist, your CV and cover letter as one document where possible (either word document or pdf). Emails sent from work email addresses will be accepted in place of written signatures.

Applications will be reviewed and assessed. Potential candidates for the awards will be invited to a panel interview on either Wednesday, 16<sup>th</sup> June 2021 or Thursday, 17<sup>th</sup> June 2021. You will have 7-10 days notice if you are invited to interview. Interviews will be scheduled for 20 minutes and will occur virtually.

### Key dates

<b>Closing date for applications:</b>	Midday, Friday 28 <sup>th</sup> May 2021
<b>Interview dates:</b> Virtual via web-based conferencing	Wednesday, 16 <sup>th</sup> June 2021  <b>OR</b> Thursday, 17 <sup>th</sup> June 2021

### NOTE:

- Applicants who choose to apply must be available for interview on the above dates. Where possible, we will try to accommodate specific needs.
- You will be notified about the outcomes of your application via email to the address that you have provided.

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- Successful applicants will be expected to start between 1<sup>st</sup> September 2021 and 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022 and to complete the award within 6 months. Requests for adjustments will be considered on an individual basis

### **HEI Contacts for ICA**

The following people can be contacted with enquiries about potential clinical academic supervisors with relevant expertise.

**AECC University College:** Prof David Newell ([dnewell@aecc.ac.uk](mailto:dnewell@aecc.ac.uk))

**Bournemouth University:** Prof. Vanora Hundley ([vhundley@bournemouth.ac.uk](mailto:vhundley@bournemouth.ac.uk))

**Plymouth Marjon University:** Prof Gary Shum ([gshum@marjon.ac.uk](mailto:gshum@marjon.ac.uk))

**University of Exeter:** Prof. Vicki Goodwin ([V.goodwin@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:V.goodwin@exeter.ac.uk))

**University of Gloucestershire:** Prof. Jane Melton ([jmelton@glos.ac.uk](mailto:jmelton@glos.ac.uk))

**University of Plymouth:** Dr. Lisa Bunn ([lisa.bunn@plymouth.ac.uk](mailto:lisa.bunn@plymouth.ac.uk))

**UWE Bristol:** Assoc Prof. Mary Cramp ([mary.cramp@uwe.ac.uk](mailto:mary.cramp@uwe.ac.uk))

## Appendix 1: Pre-Doctoral Award – Checklist

<b>Name:</b>	
<b>Area of clinical academic interest:</b>	
<b>Contact details:</b>	<b>Email:</b>
	<b>Telephone:</b>
<b>Criteria</b> <i>Please ensure you have provided all the information listed below before submission. Incomplete submissions may not be considered.</i>	<b>Answer Yes/No</b>
<b>1. Registration with an appropriate UK regulatory and professional body</b> Regulatory/professional body: ..... Registration number: .....	
<b>2. Curriculum Vitae (max of 3 pages, 12 pt font) confirming the following;</b> a) Employment with a provider of health and/or care services in line with eligibility criteria b) Minimum of 2 year's post registration practice	
<b>3. Cover letter (on headed paper) 1,000 words max (excluding references):</b> a) <b>Outline of proposed activity</b> (including background to the research area and up to 10 references) b) <b>Planned outcomes of the Internship</b> (including how these address team/service clinical priorities and needs as discussed with your line manager) c) <b>Reason for applying for the internship</b> (including capability to continue on a clinical academic career pathway and planned benefits and learning of internship) d) <b>Impact on quality of patient care</b> (specify how your planned research and related clinical practice will improve the quality of patient care) e) <b>Patient and Public Involvement</b> (specify any PPI you have done or plan to do during the award)	
<b>4. Letter of support from line manager</b> Line managers are requested to confirm that they agree in principle to support the applicant and their application. Emails from work email address are acceptable.	
<b>5. Letter of support from clinical academic supervisor</b> Supervisors are requested to highlight relevant areas of expertise and fit with current research themes. Emails from work email address are acceptable.	
<b>6. A detailed spending plan of up to £12,000 for the award period</b> Please check your budget with your line manager and/or finance team if possible.	
<b>7. I understand that, if successful, a confirmation letter from my organisation of management support and financial plans will be required prior to the provision of funding.</b>	

I can confirm that I meet the criteria for an Integrated Clinical Academic Pre-doctoral Bridging Award and I have submitted all of the evidence described above;

**Signed (applicant):** ..... **Date:** .....