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**Guidance on Applying for Bursaries for patient and public involvement in research**

**Background**

Edinburgh Clinical Research Facility has set up a bursary fund to support researchers to actively involve patients and the public in research.

Regulatory and funding bodies increasingly expect researchers to demonstrate the involvement of patients or the public in the research process. The benefits include research relevance, better design, and conduct of research, better information provision and enhanced recruitment and retention to studies. In 2022, funders and sponsors of research signed up the Shared Commitment for Public Involvement <https://www.nhsresearchscotland.org.uk/public/help-shape-research/page-3>

Patient and public involvement (PPI) in research refers to the **active** involvement of patients or the public in the research process – for instance in helping to prioritise, plan, design or carry out research.

Our bursaries although available to any project based on its merits, will prioritise those seeking to work with underserved groups – please see priorities on page 2.

**Examples of ways patients and the public can be actively involved in research**

Patients and the public can:

* help identify research questions and priorities
* look at research processes and advise researchers on how practical and acceptable they are to potential participants
* advise researchers on outcome measures and how meaningful and reliable they are to patients
* improve the language and accessibility of patient information and invitation letters
* help carry out study recruitment or data collection
* become advocates and disseminators of research findings.

**Bursaries for patient and public involvement**

The bursaries have no maximum amount and bursaries will be judged based on their merits, by both PPI professionals and experienced patient public contributors.

This bursary is specifically aimed at supporting researchers to actively involve patients and the public in their research. The bursaries will support involvement that is not otherwise able to be costed, for example prior to grant application. They will not normally fund PPI activities which can be costed into a grant application.

The strategic aim in setting up the fund is to develop and promote good research by:

* supporting pre-award funding for researchers developing grant applications
* supporting ECRs and first-time PPI activities
* ensuring PPI is conducted well and is a good experience for both the public and researchers
* raising the profile of PPI among the research community and the public

Priorities of the bursary fund are to:

* support PPI activities which aim to increase the diversity of PPI patients, carers, and families. We are specifically looking for projects which aim to involve those underserved by research.
* enable researchers to involve patients and the public at an early stage in their research
* promote PPI that has a demonstrable and meaningful impact on research
* find imaginative and innovative ways of involving patients and the public
* encourage the active involvement of patients and the public in setting research priorities and the strategic development of research

Examples of activities which can be funded include:

* setting up meetings with groups of patients, carers, service users or the public. For example hiring a venue external to your organisation, providing refreshments
* reimbursement for patients, carers etc. for their time
* reimbursement of out-of-pocket expenses incurred by members of the public such as travel, subsistence and carer costs
* materials which would not normally be accessible within your organisation.

The bursary **does not** fund projects aimed at

* raising awareness of research, sharing knowledge or engaging and creating a general dialogue with the public
* recruitment of patients or members of the public as participants in research.

**Eligibility**

* The principal applicant for funding must be a member of NHS Lothian or University of Edinburgh staff. These bursaries are not available for undergraduate or Masters students.
* The proposed project should be for health and or social care research being conducted at the University of Edinburgh and/or NHS Lothian.
* Bursaries cannot be used to pay university or NHS staff for their time.

Applications should demonstrate:

* what will be done
* how PPI will impact on the research study or research area
* how the impact of PPI will be recorded and evaluated
* how the researchers will find and approach people to involve
* how individual patients or members of the public will be supported
* outline breakdown of likely costs
* Timetable – with expected completion date.

**Application process**

Researchers are invited to submit a proposal for actively involving patients or the public in research.

* The involvement may be in one particular project or selection of projects, or in setting research priorities at departmental or divisional level.
* Applications are encouraged that fit in with one or more of the priorities of the fund (see above).

Applicants should fill in the application form and email to [carol.porteous@ed.ac.uk](mailto:carol.porteous@ed.ac.uk) by the deadline of 17th June 2022

If you have any queries, contact Carol Porteous at [carol.porteous@ed.ac.uk](mailto:carol.porteous@ed.ac.uk)

**What happens to your application?**

Your application will be reviewed by the Patient and Public Involvement Lead and the CRF Patient Advisory Group and a decision made.

**Selection criteria**

The panel will consider:

* whether the project fits with the strategic aims and priorities of this fund (see above)
* the potential immediate and long term impact of the project on research and how it will be evaluated
* whether the project can realistically be delivered within cost and time constraints
* the likely quality of involvement and whether it will be a positive and meaningful experience for both public and researchers.
* the use of innovative and imaginative approaches to PPI

Applicants will be informed of the outcome by 4th of July 2022

**Conditions of the award**

Successful applicants will be expected to

* provide a detailed written report on their project when it is completed
* write a blog piece on their experiences of undertaking their PPI activity
* be mindful of the National Standards for Patient and Public Involvement <https://www.nihr.ac.uk/news/nihr-announces-new-standards-for-public-involvement-in-research/23830>

Feedback will be given to all applicants; unsuccessful applicants can reapply in future rounds.

**Resources** **available**

A guide to patient and public involvement in research is available at <https://www.ed.ac.uk/clinical-research-facility/core-services/education/oer/ppi>

You are welcome to discuss your plans informally with Carol Porteous – [carol.porteous@ed.ac.uk](mailto:carol.porteous@ed.ac.uk)