

NIHR Three Research Schools Prevention Research Programme

Pre-application support fund guidance October 2026

As part of the capacity building activities within the NIHR Three Schools Prevention Research Programme's no-cost extension to September 2028, we have committed to providing support to those who wish to develop and submit an application for an NIHR Career Development funding award. The pre-application support fund has been set up to complement the existing [NIHR pre-application support fund](#) which aims to provide extra support to those who need it to enhance their chances of making a successful application to a [NIHR Career Development scheme](#).

This call is aimed at researchers and policy and practice partners with a clear link to the Three Schools and the work of the [Prevention Research Programme](#). The scheme aims to support applicants in developing strong career development plans that demonstrate their commitment to long-term careers in prevention-related research. Applicants should demonstrate a clear focus on prevention-related research and outline how their work aligns with the goals of the [NIHR Three Schools Prevention Research Programme](#). Additionally, applicants must present a strong career development plan, including any required training and support to prepare for their stated target NIHR funding opportunity.

Scope of funding

Funding can include:

- Funding towards **salary costs** for individuals to buy out time from current responsibilities to enhance or prepare an application for NIHR Career Development funding. This could be for a block of time, for example, 12 weeks, or it could provide support to buy someone out for one or two days a week over six months.
- Funding for an individual's **training and development** associated with enhancing a planned application for NIHR Career Development Funding.
- Costs associated with **public involvement** on an application for NIHR Career Development Funding. All support should be in line with the NIHR public contributor payment policy and be specifically associated with preparing an application for NIHR career development funding.
- Costs associated with **accessibility and any reasonable adjustments** required to support the development of an application, as a result of a health condition or disability, or caring responsibilities (beyond usual care costs).

It is anticipated to support up to ten awards, each providing funding of approximately £20,000 for a period of up to six months. Please note that all projects must be completed by 31st March 2028. **You must approach your Three Schools member training lead before preparing and applying.**

You should approach your Three Schools member Administrator early to discuss provisional costings and to ensure you get sign-off in time for the deadline.

Timetable for funding call

Action	Date
Pre-application support fund webinar	A webinar will take place on Wednesday 14 th October, 11am–12pm. To register, click here .
Deadline for applications including a CV	Noon on Friday 27th November 2026
Review and consideration (we may interview shortlisted candidates before final decisions on awards – tbc.)	By Friday 29 th January (outcomes announced week commencing 1 st February)
Awards to start from	From 1st April 2027

Eligibility

1. Applicants must meet the eligibility criteria of the NIHR career development fund they want to apply for
2. Applicants must have agreed how their current position will be covered and have support from their line manager/supervisor
3. Applicants must have a clear link with the work of the [Three Schools Prevention Research programme](#)
4. The funding is available for individuals at all career stages as long as there is a clear link to prevention research and they meet eligibility criteria as per point 1

Please note this call is running alongside a similar call from the NIHR School for Public Health Research (SPHR). Please note that you can only apply for one of these schemes. Duplicate applications may not be considered. Previous pre-application support award holders are not eligible to apply.

Eligible NIHR Career Development Schemes

Individuals should use the funds they have been awarded for a future application to one of the NIHR Career Development schemes listed below. Please note, the funds should not be used purely as bridging funding between the submission of an application and the start of an award for NIHR Career Development funding.

Predoctoral level

- Predoctoral Award (including methodologist and public health, local authority and social care streams)

Doctoral Level

- Doctoral Award (including methodologist and public health, local authority and social care streams)

Postdoctoral Level

- Development and Skills Enhancement (DSE) Award
- Postdoctoral Award (including methodologist and public health, local authority and social care streams)

- Advanced Fellowship
- Population Health Career Scientist Award
- Research Professorship

Please complete the application form using a font size no smaller than 11 point. Please read all the questions before you start to answer. Please note that you will need to submit this application form and a CV to sphr.prevention@ncl.ac.uk by noon on Friday 27th November 2026.