



**Health Education England**

**HEE North ICA Pre-doctoral Bridging  
Programme 2021-22**

**Guidance for Applicants**

## Clinical academic careers

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. Clinical academics also work in Higher Education Institutions while providing clinical expertise to health and social care.

Because they remain clinically active, their research is grounded in the day to day issues of their patients and service. This dual role also allows the clinical academic to combine their clinical and research career rather than having to choose between the two.

A researcher immersed in a clinical setting is in an excellent position to identify what research questions matter to the patient or service user, to health and social care and to their profession. They are also in a position to ensure that those questions are applicable in day to day practice and care, and to interpret and apply research findings in a practical and useful way.

Further resources on Clinical Academic Careers can be found on the [NIHR Integrated Clinical Academic Programme](#) website

## Overview

Health Education England (HEE) supports the delivery of excellent healthcare and health improvement to the patients and public of England by ensuring that the NHS workforce of today and tomorrow has the right numbers, skills, values and behaviours, at the right time and in the right place.

The Health Education England (HEE) and National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) Integrated Clinical Academic (ICA) Programme provides personal research training awards for healthcare professionals (excluding doctors and dentists) who wish to develop careers that combine clinical research and research leadership with continued clinical practice and clinical development. Applicants must belong to one of the eligible professions.

Five levels of award are available, each requiring the support of clinical and academic host organisations, which together form a career pathway for aspiring and developing non-medical clinical academics:



Alongside the NIHR national programme sit locally managed internships and bridging programmes.

## Pre-Doctoral Bridging Programme

Health Education England (HEE) offer funded places to join the Pre-Doctoral Bridging Programme in the North.

Applicants must:

- hold a professional registration and belong to one of the [ICA eligible professions](#).
- hold a substantive contract of employment with a NHS Trust or other organisation. whose core business is delivery of NHS care as a primary aspect of your professional role in the [North East-Yorkshire region](#) or [North West region](#).
- be a graduate of a Masters in Research or equivalent postgraduate qualification.
- aspire to undertake a PhD (research doctorate).

The aims of the award are to:

- compete successfully for PhD funding to further a Clinical Academic Career.
- develop skills necessary to writing a research proposal, securing PhD funding and embarking on a clinical academic career.
- provide opportunities to work with established and early career researchers and PhD students at a Higher Education Institutes.
- develop clinical academic networks necessary for a clinical academic career.
- develop research skills.
- offer insight into a clinical academic career and experience relevant to applying for further formal research training.

Pre-Doctoral Bridging Fellows will:

- participate in a programme of formal teaching (3 mandatory days) delivered in the region virtually (Zoom) or face-to-face as the situation permits, and study days to be taken flexibly.
- prepare an application for submission to NIHR, HEE/NIHR ICA CDRF or similar doctoral fellowship opportunity which includes a research proposal and suitable training and development plan.

Each Pre-Doctoral Bridging Fellow will identify an academic Mentor who will:

- be a formally qualified researcher, minimum PhD qualification.
- commit to mentoring for the duration of the project.
- facilitate high quality learning opportunities for the Fellow.
- facilitate access to research professionals as determined by the development needs of the Fellow.
- sign off the final PhD proposal by the Fellow.

All Mentors assigned to Bridging Fellows should have the skills to provide hands on support, mentorship and be able to act as a role model to the Fellows.

Applicants can nominate a Mentor provided they meet the criteria above and complete the Mentor section on the application form.

### **Funding**

The programme is free for successful applicants.

A single payment of £10,000 is offered to the Fellows NHS organisation which can cover salary costs for backfill, training and support cost and travel or other costs incurred reasonably by the Fellow. The applicant's clinical manager needs to sign the application form as evidence of the employer's commitment to facilitate release from their clinical duties for the protected study time. Study time can be taken flexibly, and applicants should discuss this with their clinical services manager at the earliest opportunity.

### **Formal teaching**

A series of workshops and Masterclasses will be scheduled over the 6 months to support the Fellows with progressing their application. These include topics such as:

- Research leadership.
- Impactful research.
- Development of a research proposal embedded with effective patient and public involvement in research.
- Building a clinical academic career.
- Costing your application – research costs, service support and treatment costs.
- Final proposal presentation and mock interviews.

Dates of the formal taught days are below (attendance is mandatory):

Day 1 – 11<sup>th</sup> November 2021 (Leeds)

Day 2 – February 2022

Day 3 – May 2022

## Outputs

At the end of the programme fellows are expected to have:

- i) developed a robust research proposal which is a suitable vehicle for a fellowship application, builds on existing research skills and experience and fits with the fellowship funder's remit.
- ii) identified high quality supervisors and appropriate mentoring and a clinical host.
- iii) identified an appropriate training and development programme to support the development of research, clinical and leadership skills.
- iv) developed a career trajectory and longer term career plans.
- v) prepared a CDRF fellowship (or equivalent) application.

For any further questions please contact the Programme Co-ordinator;

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