



Health Education England

**HEE North ICA Pre-doctoral Bridging
Programme 2022-23**

Guidance for Applicants

Clinical academic careers

Clinical academics combine clinical work with applied health research within their role. They work in health and social care 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 are 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 supports health and care professionals (excluding doctors and dentists) to develop careers that combine research with continued practice and professional development (Clinical or Practitioner Academic careers).

The ICA Programme comprises four schemes that each support individuals at different stages of their research career. Each require the support of clinical and academic host organisations, which together form a career pathway for aspiring and developing non-medical clinical academics:

- HEE Internship Scheme
- HEE/NIHR Pre-doctoral Clinical and Practitioner Academic Fellowship (PCAF) Scheme
- HEE/NIHR Doctoral Clinical and Practitioner Academic Fellowship (DCAF) Scheme
- HEE/NIHR Advanced Clinical and Practitioner Academic Fellowship (ACAF) Scheme

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).

Aims of the award to enable the fellow to:

- write a fellowship application to compete successfully for PhD funding to further a Clinical Academic Career. It is expected that the application is made within 6-12 months of the award.
- 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 face to face formal teaching (3 mandatory days) delivered in the region. In exceptional circumstances, attendance using Zoom may be agreed in advance of the session. Study days to be taken flexibly.
- prepare a high quality application for submission to HEE/NIHR ICA DCAF 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 supervisor who will:

- be a formally qualified researcher, minimum PhD qualification.
- commit to supervising 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.
- Assist with the development of the PhD Fellowship application and sign off the final PhD proposal by the Fellow.

All supervisors 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 supervisor provided they meet the criteria above and complete the supervisor section on the application form.

Funding

The programme is fully funded by HEE for successful applicants.

A 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 a full discussion of the scheme as a way of supporting clinical academic careers and 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.

Funding will be released in line with Milestone Payments linked to the mandatory attendance at the workshops.

Formal teaching

A series of workshops and Masterclasses will be scheduled over the 6 months to support the Fellows to develop their application and in recognition of the highly competitive nature of the NIHR awards. 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 will be confirmed in due course however for your own planning purposes we have indicated below when they are likely to be held (attendance is mandatory and will be linked to the release of your funding):

Day 1 – October 2022

Day 2 – December 2022 or January 2023

Day 3 – Mid February 2023

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, one that 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 DCAF fellowship (or equivalent) application.

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

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