

ARC KSS Individual Development Awards

Springboard awards 2023

Building research careers across Kent, Surrey and Sussex

Children and Young People’s Mental Health

This information is intended for those interested in applying for the ARC KSS ‘Individual Development Awards’ for applied health and social care research and particularly the Springboard award scheme. This information covers the following areas:

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Section 1 – Background of NIHR and NIHR ARCs

1.1 What is NIHR?

The [National Institute for Health and Care Research \(NIHR\)](#) is the nation's largest funder of health and care research and provides the people, facilities and technology that enables research to thrive.

NIHR's mission is to improve the health and wealth of the nation through research. The NIHR was established in 2006 and is primarily funded by the Department of Health and Social Care.

Working in partnership with the NHS, universities, local government, other research funders, patients, and the public, the NIHR delivers and enables world-class research that transforms people's lives, promotes economic growth, and advances science.

1.2 What are ARCs?

[NIHR Applied Research Collaborations \(ARCs\)](#) support applied health and care research that responds to, and meets, the needs of local populations and local health and care systems.

The NIHR ARC Kent, Surrey and Sussex is one of 15 ARCs across England, part of a £135 million investment by the NIHR to improve the health and care of patients and the public.

Each NIHR ARC is made up of local providers of NHS services, local providers of care services, NHS commissioners, local authorities, universities, private companies, and charities. These collaborations work together to conduct high quality, generalisable, applied health and care research that addresses the specific health or care issues in their region.

NIHR ARCs also act to close the second translational gap and increase the rate at which research findings are implemented into practice.

The 15 ARCs work collaboratively to address national research priorities, with individual ARCs providing national leadership in their areas of expertise.

- [Find out more about ARCs](#)

1.3 What is ARC KSS?

The National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) Applied Research Collaboration Kent, Surrey, and Sussex ([ARC KSS](#)) brings together NHS Trusts, local authorities, universities, communities, and other partners to stimulate changes through applied research in health and social care for people living in the Southeast of England and nationally.

Led by Sussex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust and Professor Stephen Peckham as Director from the University of Kent, our aim is to improve the quality, quantity and relevance of health and social care research in the area.

The ARC KSS aims to provide transforming infrastructure for the region to enable impactful research implemented into practice. To do this we will provide co-ordination, facilitation, management, and support for four core activities:

- Supporting and conducting applied research.
- Capacity building in health and social care research.
- Supporting the implementation of findings into practices locally, regionally, and nationally.
- Involving the public in research and engaging with local communities, patients and the wider public.

Section 2 – Springboard award aim, criteria, and key information

2.1 What are these awards for

In this round in 2023, we are seeking applications from individuals wanting to build research skills in the area of Children and Young People's (CYP) mental health or related areas aligned to ARC KSS themes. The award is aimed at providing dedicated time for individuals to conduct a short programme of skills development in research which may include one of the following activities:

- developing a research project/idea through public, community and/or user engagement
- develop an understanding of population need through use of existing data or consultation
- building partnerships or networks to support your future research career
- developing your knowledge of current literature and evidence
- dedicated time to apply for research fellowship schemes (e.g., pre-doctoral awards, fellowships etc.)

Projects should use the activity and knowledge gained during the award for the benefit of CYP services with relevant dissemination to support services in the region.

2.2 How much is each award and for how long?

The awards provide £5000 of funding to allow a programme of skills development. Some flexibility in the duration of the award is allowed but should be no longer than 12 months in duration.

2.3 Who can apply for the SpringBoard awards?

To apply, you must be seeking support to develop your own research skills and fit the following criteria:

- not be in receipt of funding for a research project as lead greater than £25,000 in the last 5 years.
- be employed by an [ARC KSS member organisation](#)
- Your area of proposed research development must be relevant to CYP mental health and aligned to one or more of the [ARC KSS research themes](#).

We are particularly keen to receive applications from people interested in focusing on inequalities and/ or seldom heard groups.

Note in the 2023 round, individuals employed in academic institutions and organisations not providing health and care services are allowed.

2.4 What is the total funding is available?

Up to £60,000 is available for multiple awards across two funding deadlines in 2023. Funds will be used flexibly depending on the number and quality of applications received. Indirect or estates costs cannot be claimed.

2.5 How do I apply?

To apply you should:

- Ensure your project is relevant to CYP mental health and aligns with the [ARC KSS research funding values](#) and [our themes](#).
- Complete an [application form](#) and send it to: arckssacademy@kent.ac.uk

Submit your application by 5pm by one of the deadlines below:

31st March 2023 or 31st August 2023.

Applicants should provide all the information requested on the application form. You should complete your application in clear and concise language with minimal use of technical jargon. Where you use abbreviations, these should be fully described in the first instance of using the acronym. See below for guidance on completing the application form.

2.5 Who is the main point of contact at ARC KSS?

If you have any further questions, please contact us at: ARCKSSacademy@kent.ac.uk

2.6 Why will you ask me for anonymous Equality Ethnicity, Diversity, and Inclusion information after I have submitted?

After submitting your application, you will be invited to complete an online EDI questionnaire. We encourage you to complete this so that ARC KSS can monitor and ensure our funding opportunities and activities are unbiased and inclusive. This information will be collected anonymously and will not be shared during the assessment process.

Section 3 – Application form guidance

Section 1 - Application contact details: Please provide overview details of your project including:

- Applicant name
- Contact details:
 - o contact details including address, email, and telephone number.

To improve equality, diversity, and inclusivity of our funding awards, your application will be reviewed anonymously by a panel from within ARC KSS. Section 1 of the application form will be removed and used for administrative purposes only by a member of the ARC KSS academy team and to notify you of the outcome.

Section 2 – Employment and qualifications

- Name of your employing organisation
- Professional role or job title
- Qualifications

Section 2 – Organisation and support contact details:

- Please name a key Research & Development office, research office or finance contact for your employing organisation. This person will be someone who has oversight of research or finance at your organisation and will be our contact for arranging the project contract and may also ensure governance oversight of the project and provide local support.
- ARC KSS will provide a package of support to successful candidates including a professional and/or academic mentor. If you already have a mentor in mind, please indicate this here and name any identified mentor or supervisor.

Section 3 – Personal statement:

To be eligible for funding, you should fit into the opportunity criteria in Section 2.2 of this guidance document. Provide a personal statement by completing:

- Applicant research experience and interests – please tell us about any research experience you have and your areas of interest. (200 words maximum). Tell us about your experience to date, your personal research interests and how you are well placed to conduct this project.

- Tell us how this award will support your research interests, career and/or career progression? (200 words maximum). Tell us about your career aspirations in research and how this award will help you achieve these. Tell us about your next steps after completion of your award.
- Please tell us any funding awards you have received in the last 5 years as a research project lead. Note, to be eligible for this award you **must not** have received an award over £25,000 as project lead in the last 5 years.

Section 4 – Award activity Objectives:

- Proposed application activity objectives – Please describe what activities you intend to do during your award (maximum 600 words).

Remember to be specific and clearly set out what skills you will be developing and how. Ensure you include a timeline of when you will achieve what and include information on what the main outputs or things you will produce will be. Detail how the activities might:

- ✓ develop skills you need to take a research idea forward - **tell us what those skills are, when and how you will obtain them**. How might building these skills benefit your career and organisation? Include a clear timeline for all activities.
 - ✓ Do you intend to apply for national research opportunities? If so, tell us what you need to help you achieve this. You **must also specify what award you will be applying to** and how the activities you propose will help you achieve the submission. Include a clear timeline for all activities.
- Tell us how this award will build your skills and make a difference to your practice or the care you provide and/or your research goals? (maximum 200 words)

How will you being active in research expand your skills and benefit the services you provide? What contribution might you be able to make back to your service as a result of the skills you build and the knowledge you gain? Think about how you would justify your research to you line manager – use this framework to tell us how what you propose will benefit your department and your practice.

- Tell us why your proposed area of interest is important to the public, patients, service users and/or communities (maximum 200 words).

What is the problem and what does the population of interest look like and why is this research important now?

Tell how building your research skills through the proposed activity will contribute to this local patient or service user need? Maybe the outputs or next steps after your award will contribute to future research or contribute directly to the evidence base to an area of need for this population.

- Please indicate which ARC KSS theme or themes your project aligns with and describe how your interests align (maximum 200 words)

Name here which themes your project is relevant to and exactly how your project will help ARC KSS in our theme goals. You can find more detail on our research themes and sub-themes in the [ARC KSS research funding values](#) and [our summary of research theme objectives](#). Funding will be prioritised for activities aligning closely to the ARC KSS themes and subthemes, therefore, please make sure your project closely links to ARC KSS research themes.

Section 5 - Authorisations:

To ensure your application has been reviewed and approved by your organisation, all application forms should be signed by your line manager and a representative from your organisation to confirm that the application has been approved. The representative from your organisation may be a relevant Research and Development department contact, organisational finance contact or senior departmental lead within the organisation with authority to approve the submission and commitment of 'in kind' support agreed and who is not your line manager.

Your form should also be signed by you as the applicant to confirm this is your own proposal and proposed project.

Electronic signatures will be accepted.

NOTE: Please ensure to contact your Research Office as soon as possible if you intend to submit an application to ensure appropriate oversight and meet relevant timelines for supporting, costing and approving submissions.

Section 4 – Application assessment, timelines, and reporting information

4.1 How will applications be assessed?

Decisions will be made by a single assessment panel. Applicants will be notified within 1 month of the submission deadline. The panel will be made up of the ARC KSS capacity building lead, members of the ARC KSS senior staff or from our member organisations and two public members.

Applications will firstly be assessed to confirm applicant eligibility and that your application meets the remit. Therefore, please consider the call remit and these guidance notes carefully to ensure what you want to do is right for this call.

Proposals meeting all the screening criteria will go on for shortlisting by the assessment panel. Applications will be assessed using the below criteria.

- **Call remit and alignment to ARC KSS research themes:** the assessment panel will consider how well your application fits the call remit and how closely it will support ARC KSS in its research themes and aims. Consideration will be given to potential for future research and to what extent the research area addresses a local/regional priority and/or aligns with NIHR national priorities and research agendas.
- **Objectives:** How appropriate are the proposed activities and plans for skills development? Is the activity clearly explained and appropriate? Is the project timeline achievable?
- **Opportunities for personal development:** Your application will be assessed with respect to the stage of your research career and how much this award will support you in your career goals as an independent researcher.
- **Personal research strengths:** Does this present a good opportunity to support a career trajectory or someone who is building or becoming involved in research to benefit their organisation.

4.2 What feedback will applicants receive?

Successful applicants will receive comments from the interview panel within 6 weeks of submission and will be expected to address any significant areas of concern prior to commencing the project with the support of the ARC KSS team and their mentor.

Unsuccessful applications will receive detailed feedback within six weeks of submission on areas that could be strengthened and advice on whether the activities can be supported by ARC KSS in other ways. You will be given the opportunity to discuss feedback with a member of the ARC KSS team if you wish.

4.3 How do I report back to ARC KSS on the progress of my project if successful?

Details of reporting will be included in your funding letter. There will be an induction session, informal drop-ins every two months for support and a short-written report requested at the end of the award where you are asked to reflect on your achievements against your objectives and how the award has helped you build research skills. Reports will be reviewed by a member of the ARC KSS academy team.

You will also be provided with a mentor and expected to meet with your mentor on a regular basis.