



Healthcare technologies new challenges NetworkPlus

Opportunity status:	Open
Funders:	Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC)
Funding type:	Grant
Total fund:	£5,000,000
Publication date:	1 July 2020
Opening date:	2 November 2020
Closing date:	13 January 2021 16:00 UK time

Last updated: 10 November 2020

[Start application](#)

NetworkPlus grants are for researchers at UK higher education institutions, research council institutes, UKRI-approved independent research organisations and NHS bodies.

The grants aim to support research communities that address our priorities for transforming healthcare:

- technologies to improve healthcare treatment
- affordable and inclusive healthcare solutions
- healthier environments
- new digital healthcare systems.

We will support networks for three to four years, covering investigator salaries, travel and subsistence, workshops, and administrative support.

[Close all](#)

Who can apply

EPSRC will accept full proposals only where an application has been invited, following a successful outline.

This grant is open to UK higher education institutions, research council institutes, UKRI-approved independent research organisations and NHS bodies with research capacity.

[Find out more about institutional eligibility.](#)

What we're looking for

The Healthcare technologies (HT) theme would like to support between six and eight 'NetworkPlus' grants to allow development of HT research and communities in new healthcare areas of national and global importance.

[Find out more about EPSRC's healthcare technologies strategy and grand challenges.](#)

The NetworkPluses could undertake a variety of activities including workshops, events, feasibility studies, secondments or horizon scanning. It is essential that user engagement is considered in the wider network membership.

Each proposal must explain the fit to the chosen challenge area and demonstrate evidence of how they will connect with on-going excellent research in the UK to grow and develop the network.

NetworkPlus proposals should complement current research activities and existing networks and may build on new opportunities highlighted by previous networking activities.

For more information, [read the Healthcare technologies new challenges NetworkPlus invitation for outlines.](#)

Funding available

There is up to £5 million available to fund a balanced portfolio of awards.

Investigators' salaries

The principal investigator and up to four co-investigators (Co-Is) can request funds to cover their salary costs for the time spent on setting up and leading the NetworkPlus. The salary costs of NetworkPlus participants should not be included in the proposal and we would not expect these individuals to be Co-Is.

Travel and subsistence

Travel and subsistence enabling members of the NetworkPlus to meet together to exchange ideas and expertise. This may include visits by or to experts overseas.

Administrative support

A sufficient level of administrative support should be requested to help in the co-ordination and management of the NetworkPlus and ensure smooth running of the NetworkPlus.

Organisation of activities

Funding can be requested for costs involved in running activities such as networking events, expert working groups, debates, virtual discussion forums, lectures, seminars, problem solving workshops.

Applicants are encouraged to think creatively about the range of activities that could support the delivery of the NetworkPlus goals. Funds can be requested for PDRA staff, consumables, travel and subsistence and any other costs eligible under 'directly incurred' headings.

This is likely to include a budget for feasibility studies that can be allocated to researchers at other universities, in this case applicants will need to think carefully about how this budget will be managed.

Equipment is not available through this call.

How to apply

Following a successful outline stage, you should prepare and submit your full proposal using the [Joint Electronic Submission system \(Je-S\)](#).

When adding a new proposal, you should go to documents, select 'new document', then select:

- council: EPSRC
- document type: standard proposal
- scheme: standard
- on the 'project details' page you should select the call: "Healthcare technologies new challenges NetworkPlus – full proposals".

As well as the Je-S application form, the following documents must be submitted:

- case for support: eight pages – two on your track record and six on the scientific case
- workplan: one page
- justification of resources: two pages
- CVs: up to two A4 sides each only for named post-doctoral staff, researcher-Cols (research assistants who have made a substantial contribution to the proposal and will be employed on the project for a significant amount of time), and visiting researchers

- letters of support from all project partners included in the Je-S form: no page limit
- host organisation letter of support: two pages
- cover letter: optional attachment, no page limit, not seen by peer review.

You should attach your documents as PDFs to avoid errors. They should be completed in single-spaced Arial 11 font or similar-sized sans serif typeface.

Full proposals invited following a successful outline stage must have the 'related grant' field completed in Je-S. Please use the option 'successful outline'.

See the [Je-S handbook](#) for more advice on completing applications using the system.

[See our full advice on writing a proposal.](#)

Full proposal total costs should not vary by more than 10% from the outline stage, unless feedback from the outline panel indicates otherwise or prior agreement is obtained from EPSRC.

Applicants should ensure they are aware of and comply with any internal institutional deadlines that may be in place.

After completing the application you must 'submit document' which will send your application to your host organisation's administration.

Your host organisation's administration is required to complete the submission process. Applicants should allow sufficient time for your organisation's submission process between submitting your proposal to them and the call closing date.

EPSRC must receive full applications by 16:00 on 13 January 2021.

EPSRC will not fund a project if it believes that there are ethical concerns that have been overlooked or not appropriately accounted for. All relevant parts of the ethical information section must be completed.

Find out more about [completing ethical information on Je-S](#) and [EPSRC ethical considerations](#).

How we will assess your application

Assessment process

At the first stage, outline proposals will have been assessed. The applicants for the highest ranked outlines are invited to prepare and submit full proposals. The deadline for submission of full proposals is 13 January 2021.

Up to three of the applicant team will then be invited to interview the week of 15 March 2021. The interview panel will be asked to make funding recommendations to EPSRC. A funding decision will be made by the end of March 2021.

Assessment criteria for full proposals

- Fit to the grand challenge – the contribution the NetworkPlus will make towards addressing the challenge
- Suitability of core management team – the strength of the proposed network and the range of expertise of core NetworkPlus members
- Management of feasibility funding – appropriateness of plans for assessment of the feasibility funding
- Plans for wider engagement (academics and users) – mechanism for widening the participation and collaboration with other relevant disciplines and interactions with international leaders in the field
- Network activities – the extent to which the planned activities allow the generation of ideas and implementation of plans to address the needs of the grand challenge
- Resources and management (general) – the appropriateness of the requested resources and the effectiveness of the proposed management structure and plans
- Impact – embedding impact and describing how the NetworkPlus will be impactful; appropriate engagement plans with users to accelerate impact, appropriateness of dissemination plans
- Sustainability of the activity after the lifetime of the gran

Feedback

Guidance and feedback may be given to successful outline applicants in the interests of preventing overlapping networks and creating the strongest possible networks for UK healthcare technologies research.

Feedback will be provided to all applicants after the panel interview. The final rank ordered list will be available on [EPSRC grants on the web system](#) when applicants are informed.

Find out more about the [EPSRC peer review process for standard grants](#).

Contact details

- [Jeanine Woolley](#)
07849303658
- [Kate Reading](#)
07747 780615

Any queries regarding the submission of proposals through Je-S should be directed to the Je-S helpdesk:

- [Je-S helpdesk](#)
01793 444164

Additional info

Supporting documents

- [Healthcare technologies new challenges NetworkPlus invitation for outlines](#)
- [HT new challenges NetworkPlus equality and impact assessment](#)

Aims

The aims of these NetworkPlus awards are:

- to bring together experts from across all relevant research disciplines and stakeholders, building new communities or creating new links between different existing communities, with a particular focus on those in engineering and physical sciences
- to bring focus to the relevant challenge area and identify new research strategies and opportunities for addressing the challenge
- to identify and address the barriers to achieving the challenge
- to initiate preliminary or feasibility research to tackle the challenge
- networks must be highly collaborative and with strong engagement with healthcare professionals
- to engage with interested users of research, including business, clinicians, patient groups and policy makers, to shape future research directions
- to seek for solutions as well as applications of research.

Previous NetworkPlus activities

In 2016, the HT theme funded 14 NetworkPlus awards, which are coming to an end in 2021. These networks developed a rich body of outputs, including new collaborations, grant proposals, new research methods and feasibility studies.

Lessons learned from the previous NetworkPlus activities include:

- a clear, well-defined topic for the network is needed to focus plans and activities
- administrative and host-university support for the network is vital, in order to support activities such as feasibility studies and dissemination activities
- different scales of feasibility study funding are appropriate for different research topics or disciplines
- expectation and arrangements for full economic costing of network activities need to be clear across all parties
- long-term plans for the legacy and/or sustainability of the network need to be considered early on.

Timeline

○ 1 July 2020

Outline call opens in Je-S

- **15 September 2020**
Outlines call closes

- **29 October 2020**
Outline panel meeting

- **2 November 2020**
Invitation to full proposals

- **13 January 2021**
Deadline for full proposals

- **15-19 March 2021**
Interview panel meetings

- **March 2021**
Outcomes announced

Related content

[Healthcare technologies strategy and grand challenges](#)

[EPSRC delivery plan](#)

[Guide to best practice for network grants](#)

[Resubmissions policy](#)

[Repeatedly unsuccessful applications policy](#)

[Use of animals guidance](#)

[Responsible research and innovation framework](#)

[Ethical considerations](#)

[Equality, diversity and inclusion](#)

[Reviewer selection](#)

[Conflicts of interest](#)

[Declaration on research assessment](#)

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