



Medical
Research
Council

Regional Accounts for Clinical Researchers

Webinar – 6th November 2025

Joanna Robinson, Director, Training & Careers

David Pan, Head of Programme, Training & Careers

Nicola Faramarzi, Programme Manager, Clinical Careers



Webinar Housekeeping



**Webinar is being
recorded**



**Please post
questions in the
Q&A box**



**Anonymous
comments
recommended**



**Please don't use
the 'Raise Hand'
function**



**Slides, recording
and FAQ will be
shared**

Overview

1 Clinical researchers – securing the future

2 Regional accounts for clinical researchers

- Who can apply
- What we're looking for
- What we will fund
- Assessment criteria
- Metrics of success
- Assessment process

3 Q&A Session



Medical
Research
Council

Clinical researchers – securing the future

MRC actions in context

Joanna Robinson, Director - Research Training & Careers

Clinical researchers: reversing the decline

- **OSCHR Task and Finish Group:** UK-wide - Funders, Devolved Nations, NHS, Universities, Industry, Trainees
- Evaluate current situation & causes:


System drivers


REF
Previous REF


£
University finance


NHS pressures

Disincentives


Dual Track


Training Duration


Clinical training research opportunities

New pressures

£
Personal finance


Career uncertainty & expectations

- Coordinated action across stakeholders to implement recommendations:
 - Medics (30 January 2025),
 - Nurses, Midwives & Allied Health Professionals (1 July 2025)
 - Dental (in progress)

Clinical researchers in the United Kingdom:

Reversing the decline to improve population health and promote economic growth

Clinical researchers in the United Kingdom:

Building capacity to improve population health and promote economic growth

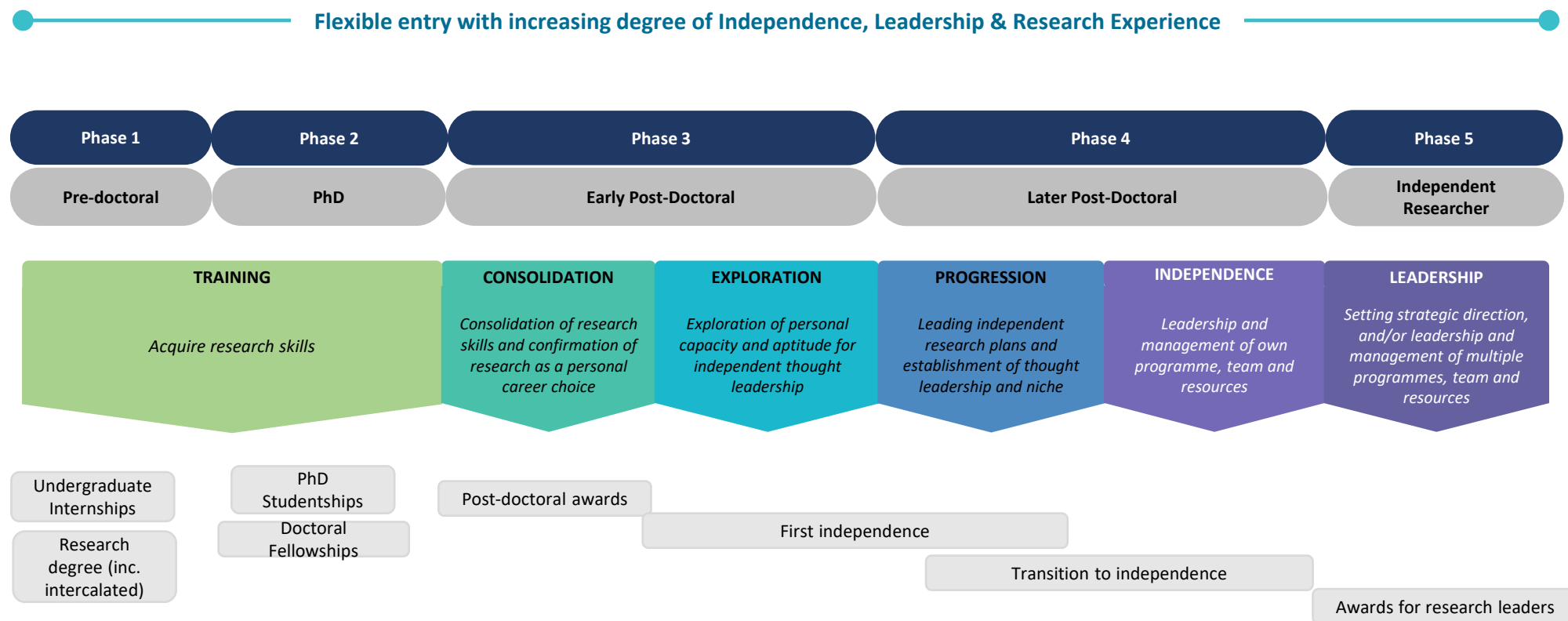
Report by the Nursing, Midwifery and Allied Health Professions Task and Finish group



Clinical researchers: Funder actions

1.1 Create common and visible national research career pathway across funders

- with increased flexibility, including PhD after completion of clinical training – 2.2



Published on [CATCH website](#)

Aligned to new [UKRI Fellowship framework](#)



Clinical researchers: Funder actions

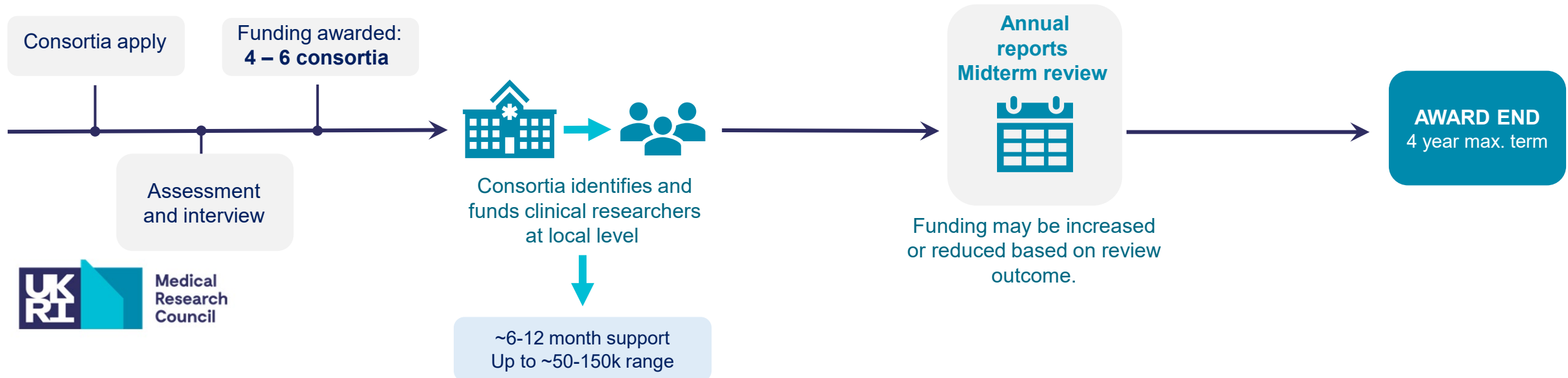
1.2 Identify and address gaps in support:

- **‘Phase 3’ challenge:** post PhD research, return to research after clinical training

MRC Regional Accounts for Clinical Researchers (RACR) - £6 million trial initiative with **ambition to scale**:

- address **gaps in support** for clinical researchers at **critical career pinch points**
- provide **flexible opportunities** across the UK to enable an individual’s long-term success

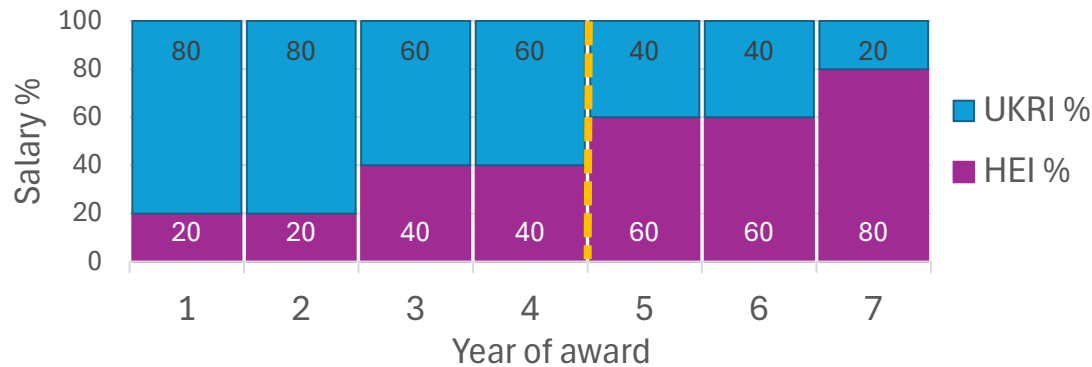
Consortia (universities and NHS trusts) provide local flexible support to (i) provide support at the right time, (ii) encourage best practice, (iii) ensure local support for an individual’s long-term success.



Clinical researchers: Funder actions

1.4 Support more clinical researchers into secure research posts

- Supporting additional 'Clinical Future Leader Fellowships' (MRC, NIHR, CRUK, BHF)
 - MRC: Build on UKRI Future Leader Fellowships (FLF) model
- 7-year (4+3) tapered award into a permanent post:

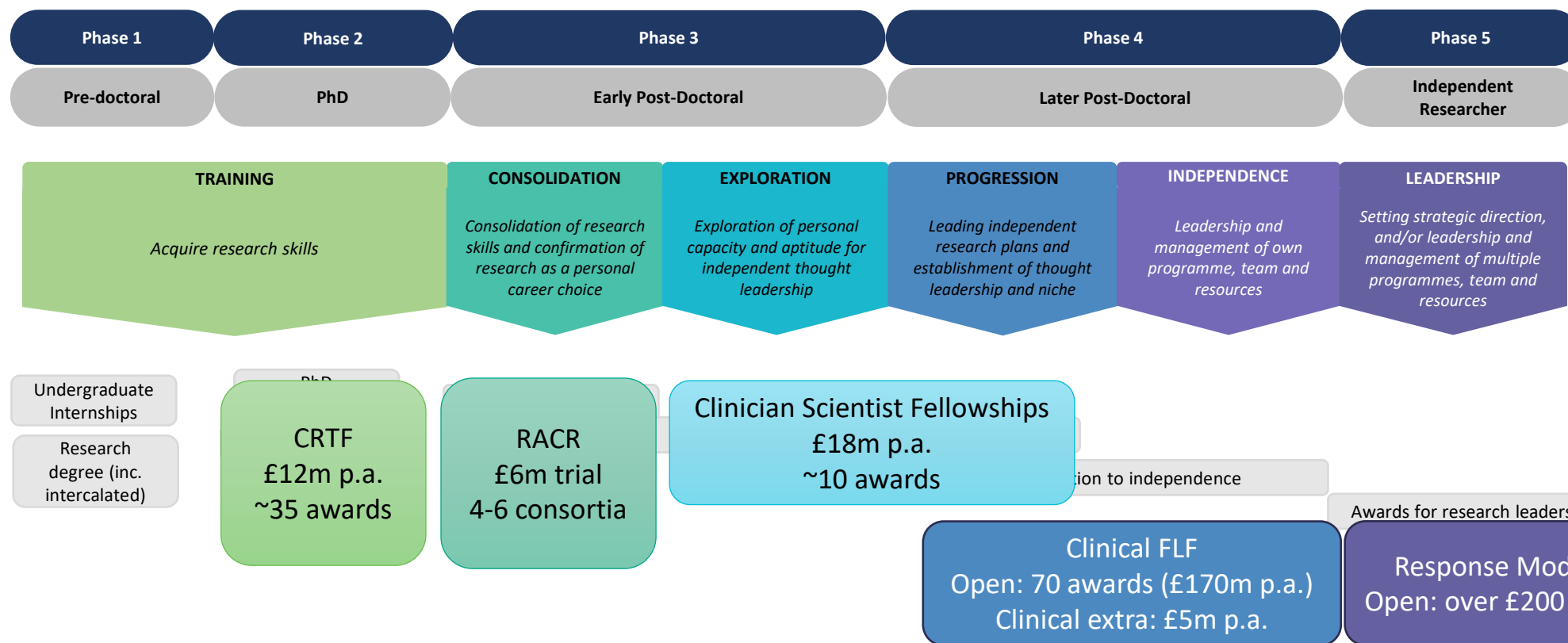


- Clinicians strong past FLF success rate - able to compete for full 70 awards p.a.
- EXTRA:** Additional nominations for clinicians (1-2 per HEI) + up to £5m more p.a. from Round 10 (deadline June 2025)



MRC's support for clinical researchers

Flexible entry with increasing degree of Independence, Leadership & Research Experience





Medical
Research
Council

Regional Accounts for Clinical Researchers

What we are looking for

David Pan, Head of Programme - Research Training & Careers
Nicola Faramarzi, Programme Manager for Clinical Careers

Regional Accounts for Clinical Researcher (RACR)

£6 million trial initiative (with ambition to scale):

- to address **gaps in support** for clinical researchers at **critical career pinch points**
- to provide **flexible opportunities** across the UK to enable long-term success

Consortia (universities and NHS trusts) use **local flexible support** to (i) provide support at the right time, (ii) encourage best practice, (iii) ensure local support for an individual's long-term success.

Funding up to **four years** will be provided at 100% full economic cost (FEC)

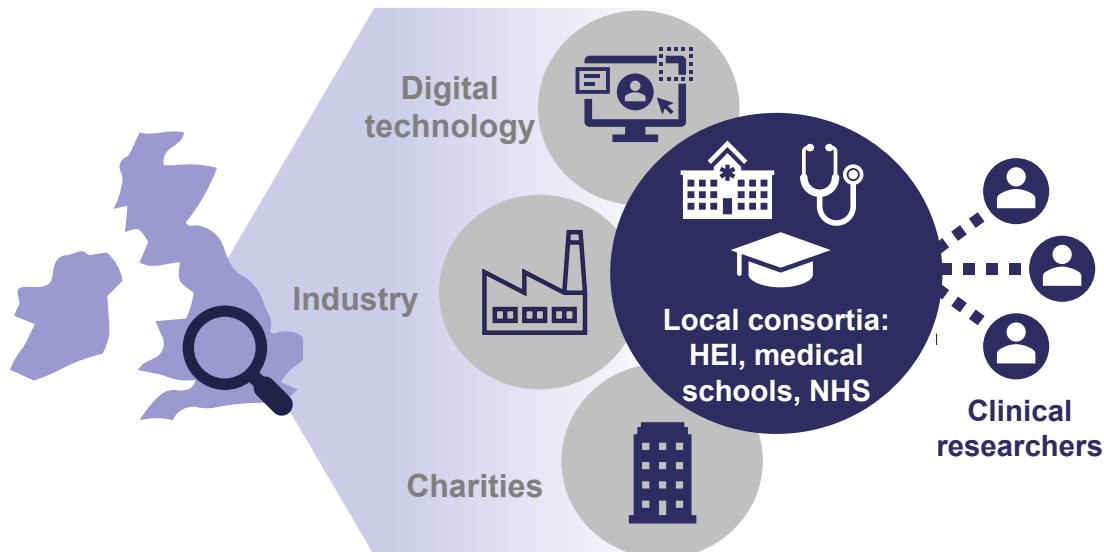
Support anticipated for **four to six RACR awards** within pilot phase:

- **short term** (6 – 12 months) and **small scale** (50 – 150k) support to individuals
- support critical career gaps flexibly and position individuals for subsequent opportunities
- not intended to provide full-time support for extended periods

Who can apply

Consortia applicants

- Consortium of eligible UK ROs and NHS organisations
 - **Self-define** with strong rationale and any plans to scale
 - **No limit on the number of consortium partners** - any RO or NHS trust cannot be involved in multiple RACR applications.
- Wider partnerships with local charities, industry, SMEs and digital technology companies are encouraged.



Who can benefit

- RACR consortia identify fund eligible clinical researchers:
 - **Clinically active registered healthcare professional**, e.g.: Nurses, midwives, allied health professionals, healthcare scientists, pharmacists, clinical psychologists, doctors, dentists, general practitioners, veterinarians
 - **At critical career point:**
 - Post-PhD transition
 - Returning to research
- Research in **MRC core remit**



Research into **human health and disease**, from fundamental **discovery science** through to the **early translation**.

What we're looking for



- Enable clinicians at **key career pinch points** to engage with **research that directly aligns with MRC core remit** of biomedical discovery science and early translational research



- **strong regional partnership** or clear plans to develop one, involving relevant institutions and NHS trusts including, where appropriate, collaborations between newer and long-established medical schools



- **targeted plans to address** the identified career pinch points of **post-PhD transition, research re-entry**, or both



- **Complementarity** with existing local and regional initiatives, with clear strategies to enhance, expand and, where necessary, develop new offers across the regional partnership



- Strong support for individual clinical researchers, with clear plans to **nurture individuals** and enable their **future career progression** across academic and NHS settings



- robust **management and governance** plans, incorporating best practice in equality, diversity and inclusion, to ensure transparent allocation and **distribution of funds** across partnering organisations **to multiple individuals**



- Commitment for sharing **best practice** within, both within the partnership and the wider community

What we will fund/considerations required

- Awards of £800k-£1.4m for up to **4 years** - to be used by the consortia to support individual clinical researchers.
 - Funding requested should be **proportionate** to the size and number of consortia partners.
 - **Ambition to scale** beyond the current available award range - indicate the **optimal maximum scale** and what additional **impact** could be achieved at this higher scale.
- Funding can be used to enable a **wide range of activities** that support the scheme aims.
 - e.g. salary contribution (20-50%) to support protected research time and modest direct costs of research activities that cannot be met via the partnerships.
 - Individual support expected to be **short term (6 to 12 months)** and **small scale (up to £50,000 to £150,000)**
- Added value:
 - **financial scale of existing/planned activities** by consortia that will be enhanced through a RACR.
 - Any **financial contribution from project partners or wider partnership** intended to support the consortia.
 - Building on **existing processes**. Where **essential**, administrative costs **must not exceed £20,000 FEC**

Assessment Criteria

- **RACR partnership** - Who are the proposed consortia partners and what are the benefits that will be achieved from working together?
- **Proposed activities** - What activities will this award support and how will they align with the objectives of the RACR call?
- **Operations and governance** - What is the governance, management and reporting processes which will be in place for the RACR? What metrics of success?
- **Research environment, training and support** - How will the academic and NHS partnership demonstrate strong support for individual clinical researchers?
- **Equality, diversity and inclusion** - What are the plans for EDI? How will you embed EDI principles at all levels and in all aspects of the RACR?
- **Resources and cost justification** - What will you need to deliver your proposed work and how much will it cost?

Highly ranked proposals will be invited to the interview stage based upon two factors:

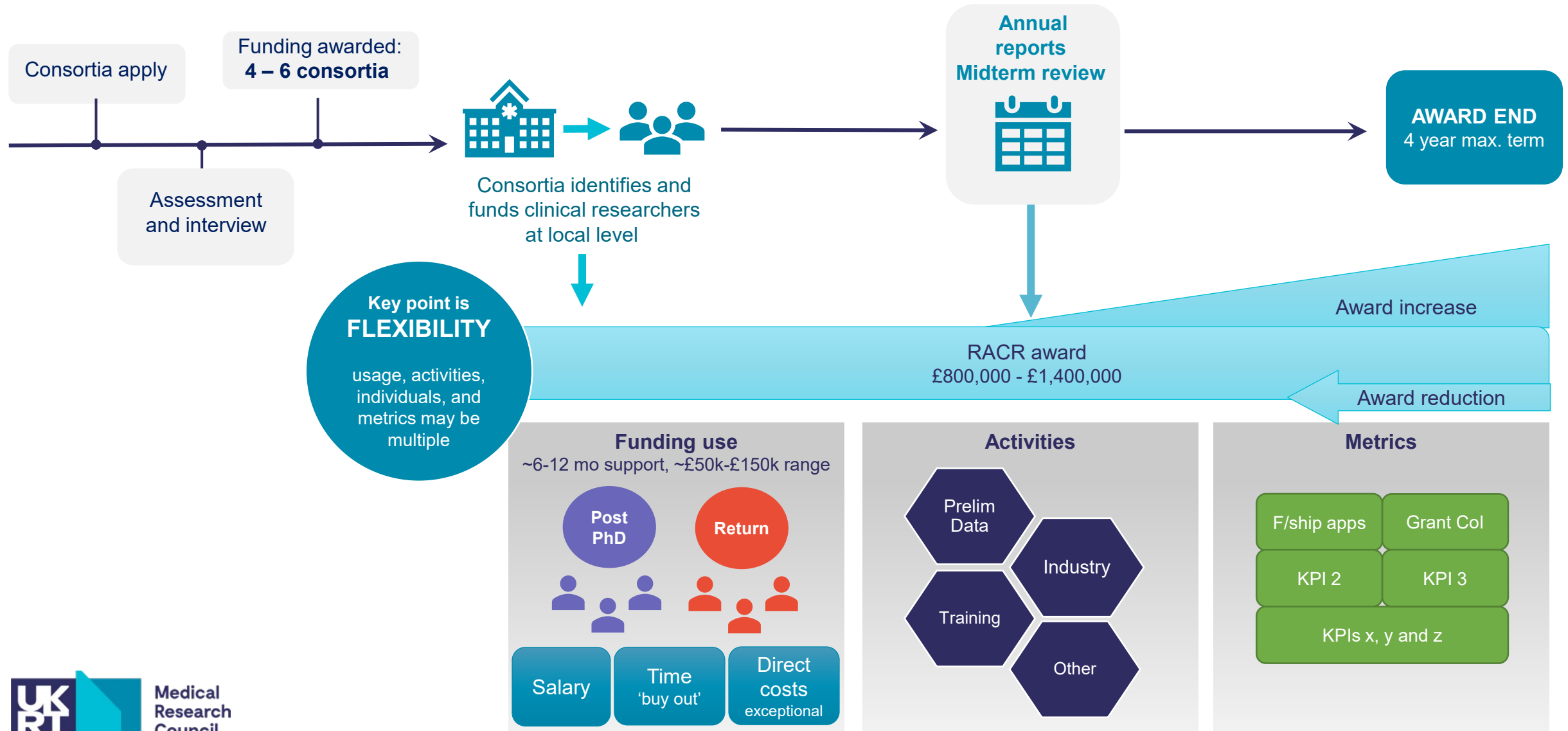
- i) performance against all assessment criteria and
- ii) consideration of regional distribution across the UK.

Metrics for success

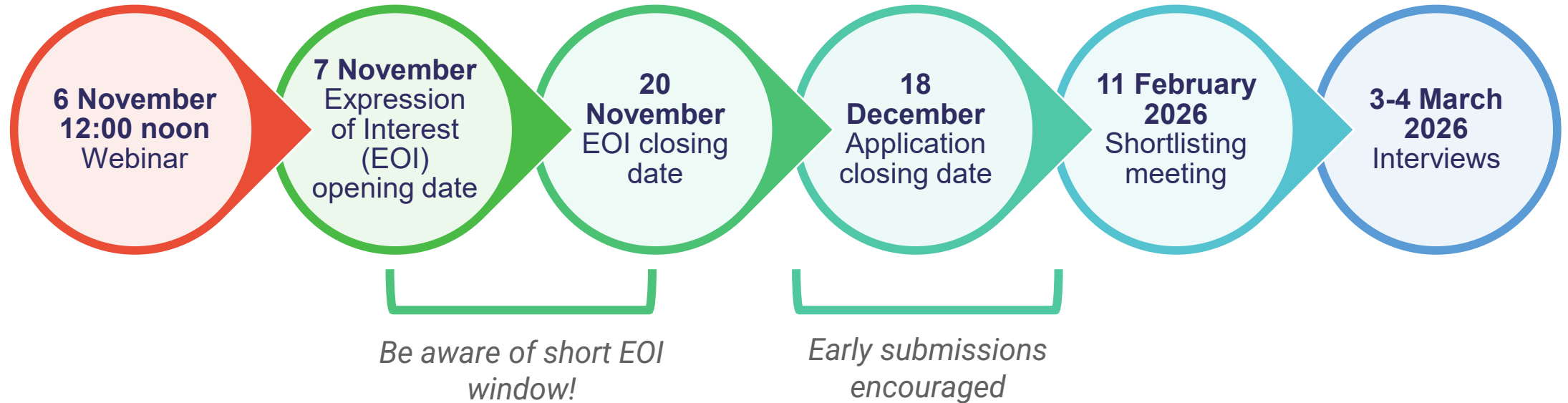
- Detail the metrics of success you will use to benchmark the **impact** of the RACR
 - How **outputs**, **outcomes**, and **impacts** will be monitored
 - Consortia should suggest these as part of application
 - E.g. more clinicians staying research active, submissions to personal awards, involvement in and longer-term success etc...
- These will be reported, monitored and evaluated via **light-touch annual reporting** and monitoring
- A **midterm review** will determine **successive funding instalments**, which could include a funding uplift or reduction.

RACR overview

RACR awards are intended to provide flexible support for those combining academic research with UK clinical training or clinical duties at critical career points.



Assessment Process



Expression of interest will request details of:

- the key consortia partners. Additional partners may evolve until the full submission
- an indicative value



Medical
Research
Council

OFFICIAL

Questions?



Joanna Robinson
Director
Training & Careers



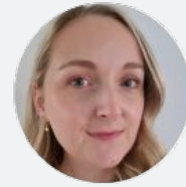
David Pan
Head of Programme
Training & Careers



Nicola Famarzi
Programme Manager
Training & Careers



Sarah Reynolds
Funding Lead
Funding Policy & Operations



Amy Prosser
Operations Manager
Funding Policy & Operations



Medical
Research
Council

OFFICIAL

Thank you



Medical Research
Council



Medical Research
Council