

NIHR Oxford Biomedical Research Centre

Guidance for EOI Applicants

We are inviting Expressions of Interest (EOI) for programmes of work (Themes) that are focused on biomedical innovation and early translational and experimental medicine research that addresses the greatest challenges of the health and care system i.e. benefits patients and the public, the health and care system and broader economic gain.

We welcome EOIs for full Themes as well as smaller programmes of work that could contribute towards a larger Theme. If you are submitting a smaller programme then provide as much information as possible.

Themes should be ambitious in their plans. We are not asking for details now but governance will need to be in place to course-correct and pivot funding to new, emerging priorities.

The [BRC Steering Committee](#) will review all EOIs and may ask applicants to adjust their plans so that when brought together all of the Themes embody a coherent Centre.

The completed forms should be no more than three pages in total. Please do not use a font size smaller than Arial 11 point, and do not edit the questions or headers. **The form must be submitted as a Word document by 13:00 on Friday 22 May.**

Expectations of a Theme/Programme

BRCs fund infrastructure to undertake and support early translational and experimental medicine research. The aim is to translate discoveries from basic/discovery science into clinical research, and through to benefits for patients and the public, the health and care system and for broader economic gain.

The scope of early translational and experimental medicine within the NIHR spans the transition between the pre-clinical/clinical boundary, from 'first-in-human' studies through to the equivalent of Phase II clinical trials. This would include studies that are undertaken in human participants, or using human tissues that aim to identify mechanisms of pathophysiology or disease, demonstrate proof-of-concept, or the validity of new experimental designs and approaches.

This may include research to develop new therapeutic interventions, digital innovations, devices, preventive measures, diagnostic tests, etc. Successful approaches to these areas will need to consider the needs of patients and the public, as well as the broader health and care sector, both now and over the longer term.

Funding includes research infrastructure costs incurred in carrying out a programme of early translational and experimental medicine research. This includes funding of staff and core research facilities. Funding for research projects is allowed but the total value of the BRC contribution to a single majority funded study should not exceed £50,000.

Funding will not be provided for university laboratories or infrastructure, or to meet the costs of animal research, or other work which is not human-facing early-translational and experimental medicine research.

In the current BRC, Theme budgets average £5m. However, we expect Themes to have a range of budgets depending on size and scope.

Themes will be expected to transfer some of their budget to research institutions outside of Oxford in order to demonstrate meaningful collaboration.

Theme Leadership

We expect Theme Leaders to be at full Professor level or have plans to achieve this before the start of the BRC (1 April 2028).

The Theme Leadership should have a track record of:

- Leading large programmes of research
- Undertaking internationally competitive early translational and experimental medicine research (evidenced by e.g. publication output, success at attracting external grant funding, developing IP)
- Translating basic/discovery science into benefit for patients, the health system and for broader economic gain
- Developing research careers
- Delivering inclusive research

Individuals may serve as Theme Lead or co-Lead for a maximum of two full terms or 10 years, whichever is longer. This applies to roles delivered consecutively or across multiple terms and/or multiple centres. You do not need to provide a budget breakdown in the EOI but we expect that financial support for Theme Leadership will not exceed 0.2 FTE/2PAs.

Themes will be expected to include several sub-themes. There are no restrictions on who can act as a sub-theme lead but these should be considered development opportunities for more junior researchers.

Research Inclusion

We are not asking for detail at this stage but inclusive research design is now a condition of NIHR funding so there will be a strong focus on this in the full application. You will therefore be expected to outline how you will consider inclusive research design and sex and gender throughout the whole research lifecycle as part of the full application.

For more information see:

www.nihr.ac.uk/about-us/who-we-are/research-inclusion/funding-application-guidance

www.nihr.ac.uk/about-us/who-we-are/policies-and-guidelines/sex-and-gender-research