UK Centre for Evidence Implementation in Adult Social Care (Strategic Priorities Fund)

Call specification

Summary
The Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC), part of UK Research and Innovation (UKRI), and the Health Foundation are co-funding a UK Centre which will lead the way for better implementation of high-quality research evidence in adult social care.

We are seeking to appoint an experienced Centre Director and leadership team, who will lead the co-development, implementation and delivery of the Centre.

The Director and leadership team will be appointed in summer 2020 and the design and the delivery of the Centre will begin in late autumn 2020.

Recognising the synergy between good evidence and good practice, the Centre will bring together adult social care staff, people with lived experience of adult social care, experts in the mobilisation and implementation of research evidence, social care providers, commissioners and policy experts, and academic teams from across the UK, to achieve the following aims:

- A greater use of high quality research evidence by adult social care staff when implementing innovations in social care, leading to enhanced care delivery and outcomes across the UK
- Building capability, where appropriate, among the workforce to identify and to evaluate innovations in adult social care, and at its interfaces with other services, including health, to inform local, regional and national policy and practice
- Greater connectivity across social care providers and staff, commissioners, innovators, people with lived experience of social care, academics, and policy makers nationally and locally, to promote the better use of evidence into practice and support the adoption and spread of innovations in care
- Improved understanding of behaviours and mechanisms that lead to, or prevent, the uptake and implementation of evidence across social care and the development of tested ways of addressing the barriers to uptake in different settings.

The development and delivery of the Centre will comprise three phases, each led by the Centre Director and leadership team:

2. Establishment phase of 12 months (April 2021 to March 2022).
3. Five-year delivery phase (April 2022 to March 2027).

The funder contribution to fund the Centre is a maximum of £15 million for a total duration of 78 months.
When applying to be the Centre Director and leadership team, applicants should specify the full Economic Costs (fEC) for the six month co-development phase only in the proposal form. The funder contribution for the co-development phase is £248,000 at 65% fEC.\(^1\)

We will request detailed costs for the establishment and delivery phases from the appointed Director and leadership team during the co-development and establishment phases.\(^2\) These costs do not need to be provided in your initial proposal form.

We expect work to develop and establish the Centre to begin at pace upon commencement of the grant in autumn 2020. As such, successful applicants will need to have a demonstrable track record of setting up and managing a large-scale programme across a diverse group of collaborators, as well as connection to national and local contexts and stakeholders in adult social care across the UK.

The Centre will be locally embedded, but also have a UK-wide reach, and the Director and leadership team will need to engage with key stakeholders to develop a delivery model that reflects local needs, and yet is also relevant to national priorities in adult social care. The Centre must be set up in a way that produces learning relevant to adult social care systems across the UK and enables the spread of knowledge throughout the UK.

Finally, the Centre will be impact-driven. The Centre Director must build on the success of existing initiatives, while demonstrating how the Centre will be different in order to make progress on current challenges related to supporting evidence implementation in social care.

**How to apply**

Applicants are strongly encouraged to complete an Intention to Submit (ItS) summarising the people and partners to be involved in the proposal and how the aims of the call will be addressed. The Intention to Submit has been designed to support you with the development of your proposal and we will provide feedback to applicants on eligibility and fit to call where appropriate. An ItS should be submitted via web form by no later than 16:00 on 22 November 2019.

Full proposals should be made via the UK Research and Innovation Joint Electronic Submission (Je-S) System (https://je-s.rcuk.ac.uk/) and submitted to the ESRC by no later than 16:00 on 29 January 2020. They must be costed and approved by the relevant institutional authority before submission.

The Director and leadership team will be appointed through a commissioning process which will include peer review and an expert Commissioning Panel. The panel membership and peer review will include a range of relevant research disciplines, sector stakeholders and people with lived experience of social care. Anonymised reviewer comments will be sent to applicants for written response, before consideration by the panel.

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\(^1\) Proposals should state the 100% fEC of the project and the funders will meet 65% of these costs (unless there are exceptions paid at 100%). The rate of 65% fEC combines ESRC and Health Foundation approaches to funding using an algorithm to reflect ESRC’s standard fEC rate and Health Foundation funding for direct costs of grants.

\(^2\) Funder contributions for the establishment and delivery phases of the Centre are given on page 13 of this call specification document.
If your proposal is shortlisted by the Commissioning Panel you will be invited for interview on 3 June 2020 by members of the Panel. Following the interview, the Panel will make a funding recommendation to the Management Board (set up to oversee the initiative) and funders, who will make the final funding decision.

Full details of how to apply to be the Centre Director, the selection criteria for assessing applications, and the commissioning timetable are given on page 15 of this call specification document.

1. **Background**
Adult social care across the UK is under increasing pressure and undergoing change. Social care is delivered through a highly devolved model and by a wide range of providers, with different levels of integrated health and social care provision across the four countries of the UK. It interacts with other services including (but not limited to) housing, education, transport, health, and criminal justice.

Evidence on innovations and improvements is available to social care staff and commissioners across the UK, but the complex nature of the system, including a large and distributed workforce often with different levels of training and experience, mean that frontline practice may not benefit sufficiently from research evidence. Increased implementation of evidence-based innovations and improvements in adult social care is key to ensuring better outcomes for people who use services, and their carers and families. Implementing innovative ways of providing social care is therefore essential, but challenging.

2. **The UK Centre for Evidence Implementation in Adult Social Care**
The Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC), part of UK Research and Innovation (UKRI), and the Health Foundation are co-funding a UK Centre which will lead the way for better implementation of high quality research evidence in adult social care.

This call invites proposals for a Director and leadership team to establish and deliver the Centre.

Recognising the synergy between good evidence and good practice, the Centre will support those working in adult social care, including transitions into adult social care for young adults, to implement existing evidence into practice to provide high quality care.

The Centre will also build capability within the sector to evaluate improvements and innovations in social care. It must establish mechanisms to gather learning from implementation and evaluation activities by social care staff, and share this knowledge with others in the workforce, and with organisations who provide evidence and guidelines. It will

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ii We acknowledge that adult social care means different things to different people. Descriptions of adult social care have been offered by the NIHR School for Social Care Research (www.sscr.nihr.ac.uk/evidence/) and the National Audit Office (www.nao.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/Adult-social-care-at-a-glance.pdf) amongst others, and guidance on social care research has been provided by Social Care Wales. For the purposes of this call we are not specifying a definition of adult social care and use the term broadly to cover provision of help and support in a variety of settings, for adults and those in transition to adult social care from children’s services, and its interfaces with other services (e.g. health, housing and education), to enable people to lead fulfilling, independent and healthy lives, improve their quality of life or keep them safe from harm.
operate across the UK, working closely with the social care sector and be co-produced and delivered with people who have lived experience of adult social care and their carers.

The Centre will provide leadership, coordination and a trusted focal point for public, private and voluntary sector collaboration to create a lasting legacy, and develop a shared understanding of evidence-informed innovation and improvement in adult social care.

Feedback from stakeholders during the development of this call specified that while mobilisation of evidence into usable formats was important, the real unmet need lies in the adoption or implementation of existing evidence into frontline practice. In the context of the Centre, we refer to mobilising evidence as an umbrella term for making evidence accessible, understandable and useful for knowledge users (eg front line adult social care practitioners, providers and commissioners) and overcoming the barriers to its use, thereby enabling greater use of evidence.

The Centre’s funding and activities will therefore be directed at supporting the mobilisation and implementation of research evidence from existing evidence-based interventions. While the Centre may test the spread and scaling of innovation and improvements in service design, the funding is not intended to develop and test entirely new interventions or routinely fund the evaluation of services unrelated to the Centre’s implementation activities.

**Aims and scope of the Centre**

The Centre will bring together adult social care staff, people with lived experience of adult social care, experts in the mobilisation and implementation of research evidence, social care providers, commissioners and policy experts, and academic teams from across the UK. It will aim to support the social care workforce to implement research evidence into practice, based on current knowledge about what works and in what context for people who need support. In doing so, the Centre will be mindful of demand on public services, the workforce and carers.

The overarching aims that the funders wish to achieve through the Centre are:

- a greater use of high quality research evidence by adult social care staff when implementing innovations in social care, leading to enhanced care delivery and outcomes across the UK
- building capability, where appropriate, among the workforce to identify and to evaluate innovations in adult social care, and at its interfaces with other services, including health, to inform local, regional and national policy and practice
- greater connectivity across social care providers and staff, commissioners, innovators, people with lived experience of social care, academics, and policy makers nationally and locally, to promote the better use of evidence into practice and support the adoption and spread of innovations in care
- improved understanding of behaviours and mechanisms that lead to, or prevent, the uptake and implementation of evidence across social care and the development of tested ways of addressing the barriers to uptake in different settings.

The scope of potential activity is wide, and the appointed leadership team will refine the specific priorities for the Centre working with stakeholders during the co-development phase of the Centre (see below for more details on the development and delivery of the Centre).

Core activities of the Centre are anticipated to be:
• mobilising the existing evidence base around innovations and improvements in adult social care. Where necessary the Centre will need to pull together and prepare evidence for implementation, however it should not duplicate synthesis and dissemination work undertaken by other organisations. The focus of the Centre is on the implementation of evidence
• improving the adoption and spread of innovations and improvements in frontline care through an understanding of what works in evidence implementation, in what contexts and how it can be scaled
• building capability in the workforce and frontline practice to better identify, use and implement research evidence to improve the design and delivery of services
• maximising evidence use by those working in social care with an understanding of how to better support the implementation of interventions, the barriers to uptake of evidence, and how to create an environment conducive to innovation
• supporting local partners to develop the skills required to both undertake high quality locally funded evaluation of practice and share the outcomes with relevant stakeholders in a robust way, using or building sustainable local partnerships with the Further Education and Higher Education sector to support capacity building and with potential users of evaluation evidence
• generating UK-wide learning, maximising the potential for comparative analysis, to understand the contexts and legislative frameworks that facilitate or inhibit implementation of evidence-based improvements and innovations
• developing networks to help spread and share innovations in social care systems through connected, partnership working.

3. Director and leadership team

The success of the Centre will depend on excellent leadership that provides innovative solutions to the implementation of evidence into practice and works with existing infrastructure across the four UK nations, without duplicating.

The Centre will develop a team of knowledge mobilisation and implementation experts, social care sector stakeholders and representatives of people with lived experience of social care and their carers, and academics to deliver change through greater knowledge mobilisation and evidence implementation within the sector.

Therefore, the Director leading the Centre will:
• be a recognised leader in their field and able to demonstrate a strong understanding and experience of improvement or innovation in adult social care or a relevant field
• have a demonstrable track record of setting up and managing a large-scale programme and associated risks across a diverse group of collaborators to achieve the desired outcomes
• have experience of running an effective leadership team and providing supportive and inspiring leadership to colleagues
• understand and be able to work within different UK wide systems and policy landscapes
• be hosted by a research organisation eligible for funding from UKRI research councils or the Strategic Priorities Fund.
The wider leadership team is likely to include the following experience and expertise, although some of this input may be provided through partnerships and advisory structures included in the delivery model for the Centre:

- people with lived experience of social care and carers
- social care managers, practitioners and senior social workers and commissioners covering a range of settings
- experience of supporting improvement or innovation in the field of social care – understanding challenges of implementation
- expertise in knowledge mobilisation in complex systems
- expertise in training and how to put together training packages for social care practitioners
- experience and expertise in undertaking high quality local evaluations in care settings
- experience of outcome and impact measurement and reporting
- experience of setting up a new large-scale initiative, involving a wide variety of stakeholders
- expertise to identify high quality evidence relevant to adult social care delivery
- programme and project management.

The composition of the team leading the delivery of the Centre will be expected to reflect the multifaceted nature of the challenge.

Given the aims of the Centre, an approach that is focused solely on academic research, synthesis and dissemination of evidence will not be appropriate for this initiative. The Centre may need to carry out some limited research and synthesis activity to support the use of evidence and deliver its aims, but it will not be focused on research and dissemination.

The leadership must bring fresh perspectives to spreading innovation in social care, and be action-focused, prioritising the involvement of relevant stakeholders and those with lived experience of social care to bring about demonstrable change.

**Partnerships and collaboration**
Collaboration with social care research, evidence, practice and policy stakeholders and those with lived experience of social care will be critical to the Centre’s success in achieving its aims. In addition to including key individuals in the leadership team, it is expected that the Centre will partner, collaborate and engage with a wide range of stakeholders to agree priorities and deliver its activities and develop strong partnerships at a local level to increase its capacity and reach. This could include working with local government, further education and higher education institutions and local charities and social enterprises. All communication, engagement and impact activities must be planned in detail and properly resourced.

**Evidence, policy and practice landscape**
The Centre will draw on research and evaluation evidence and guidance funded by others and will need to complement and influence the existing policy and practice landscape, while avoiding duplication of activity.

The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) will be a key stakeholder for the Centre to engage, with the aim of promoting the use of high quality evidence and existing guidelines and ensuring that learning from the Centre and evaluation undertaken by
social care workers contribute to developing the adult social care evidence base. It is acknowledged that there are sources of evidence beyond NICE guidelines and different relationships with NICE or other, similar organisations in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. Applicants will be expected to establish collaborations with these organisations as appropriate. iv

The funders have established a programme Management Board to oversee the initiative v, and the Board will facilitate engagement with the Department for Health and Social Care in England, Health and Care Research Wales, the Chief Scientist Office Scotland and Health and Social Care Northern Ireland, to support join up with existing and new social care research, evidence and delivery infrastructure, and help to develop a culture which supports the implementation of evidence by those working in social care.

Involving people with lived experience of social care
Involving people with a lived experience of social care means involving those receiving care, carers, family and friends, and organisations that represent them. People with lived experience have unique expertise that comes from their experience. Their involvement in the Centre is essential for developing ideas into proposals, being part of the leadership team to ensure that the Centre addresses relevant priorities and engages the required audiences, advising on or participating in the delivery of the activities, and monitoring and assessing outcomes.

It is expected that applicants to this call will co-produce their proposals with people with lived experience and demonstrate how they have given due consideration to the mechanisms by which they will appropriately include those with lived experience of social care in the leadership team, structure, function and design and delivery of the Centre.

There are several resources available to draw upon when developing approaches to public involvement, such as:

- UK Standards for Public Involvement partnership website: www.sites.google.com/nxhr.ac.uk/pi-standards/home
- INVOLVE resources for researchers: www.invo.org.uk/resource-centre/
- People in Research: www.peopleinresearch.org
- Health and Social Care Research and Development Division, Northern Ireland: www.research.hscni.net/personal-and-public-involvement-researchers
- Edinburgh Clinical Research Facility: www.ed.ac.uk/clinical-research-facility/patient-and-public-involvement

iv We do not expect these organisations to endorse a particular approach or proposal, nor provide letters of support.

v The Management Board is the executive decision-making body for the programme. More details on the governance arrangements for the programme are given on page 15 of this call specification document.
4. Development and delivery of the Centre

The Centre Director and leadership team will lead three consecutive phases for the Centre, over six and a half years:

1. **Six-month co-development phase** to understand local priorities within and across the four nations of the UK, engage stakeholders and build partnerships (October 2020 to March 2021).

2. **Establishment phase** of 12 months, during which the structure of the Centre will be formed and refined to deliver the activities defined in the co-development phase and embed collaborative ways of working across stakeholder groups (April 2021 to March 2022).

3. **Five-year delivery phase** (April 2022 to March 2027).

Continuation into each phase will be dependent on successful completion of the previous phases, assessed through formal reviews.

**Co-development phase (October 2020 to March 2021)**

Following appointment, the Centre’s Director and leadership team will lead a six-month co-development phase for the Centre.

A core component of the co-development phase will be to refine the remit of the Centre within the overarching outcomes and activities outlined above. This will include developing the foci for the Centre in terms of priority groups and topics, sensitive to national and regional priorities.

The experiences and perspectives of people delivering, and in receipt of, social care should be at the heart of the Centre’s programme of work, and the priorities and foci need to be co-produced with the adult social care sector, including people with lived experience, building on existing networks and infrastructure.

A key output from the co-development phase will be a theory of change for the Centre, produced by the Centre Director and leadership team, and including a comprehensive description and illustration of how and why the desired change (ie the long-term goal) is expected to happen (see below for more details of deliverables at each stage of the programme).

A further key activity during the co-development phase is to develop a delivery model for the Centre, so that it nestles appropriately in the landscape, recruits the breadth and depth of knowledge and skills needed to deliver its goals, and fully engages the relevant stakeholders, while maintaining a flexible approach to delivery. As above, the configuration of the Centre will be co-produced and refined with stakeholders.

The final delivery model will be expected to address the following principles:

- be distributed and have a UK-wide reach – engaging with key stakeholders
- be locally embedded
- have a core work programme addressing the activities of the Centre
- be set up in a way that produces learning relevant to adult social care systems across the UK and enables the spread of knowledge across the UK.
The delivery model must be carefully considered so that the Centre can focus on engagement at a country or regional level in relation to UK contexts, maximising information sharing and learning, and avoiding isolated pockets of activity. The Centre must have a presence across the UK, reflecting the capacity in each of the regions, but avoid spreading funding too thinly to be able to achieve the Centre’s objectives.

The different policy contexts and levels of regional investment are recognised, and although the Centre should work across the UK, we acknowledge that the activities of the Centre may develop at a different pace in different parts of UK.

**Establishment phase (April 2021 to March 2022)**
The co-development phase will be followed by an establishment phase of 12 months in which the Director and leadership team will form the Centre, refining its structure to deliver the activities defined in the co-development phase, and work with stakeholders to agree and implement a shared understanding and collaborative ways of working before full funding is released for a five-year delivery phase.

The operating model for the Centre, including delivery and communication processes and structures (and performance indicators) will be implemented during the establishment phase to ensure that the Centre can begin operating at pace from the start of the delivery phase.

**Delivery phase (April 2022 to March 2027)**
From April 2022, the Centre will enter a formal delivery phase. The work programme will be expected to begin from the start of the delivery phase and progress will be monitored by the funders (see below on deliverables and monitoring of the Centre).

It is anticipated that the Centre will seek to become well-embedded within the sector and develop plans for ensuring its ongoing financial sustainability beyond its initial funding period. Sustainability should be considered from the outset and built into the design and delivery of the Centre.

5. **Deliverables and monitoring of the Centre**
During its lifetime, the Director and leadership team will be required to demonstrate the progress of the Centre against the aims and scope listed above, as well as reporting its activities and outputs.

Formal reviews of the Centre’s activities will take place towards the end of the co-development phase and before the end of the establishment phase. There will then be annual reviews of progress during the delivery phase. Continuation of funding will be dependent on satisfactory progress and delivery against agreed outcomes as assessed by the Management Board, in consultation with the Programme Advisory Groupvi. Specific deliverables for the co-development phase will include:

- an established leadership team for the Centre
- a clear strategy with priorities and areas of foci for the Centre during the first 12 months of the delivery phase including a theory of change for the Centre, which highlights the activities, assumptions, enablers and anticipated outcomes for the Centre over the short to medium-term

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vi The Programme Advisory Group has been established to provide independent advice to the Management Board and funders on the delivery of the programme. More details on the governance arrangements for the programme are given on page 15 of this call specification document.
• appropriate governance structures for the Centre including an advisory structure and executive team
• core work programme for the Centre and key performance indicators (KPIs) for the establishment phase of the Centre
• agreed delivery model for the Centre, including physical locations of the Centre and collaboration model with existing policy and delivery infrastructure
• evidence of relevant stakeholder engagement and development of partnerships
• initial communications, evaluation and impact plans for the Centre, to enable messaging into the sector about the proposed design and delivery of the Centre
• forward plan for the establishment phase, including risk management and communications, and detailed costs, including full staffing.

Specific deliverables for the establishment phase will include:

• a strategic plan for the delivery of the Centre, including long-term goals, yearly objectives, resource allocation, communications activities and control mechanisms for guiding the implementation of the Centre
• a finalised delivery model ready to implement at the start of the delivery phase
• final collaboration agreements with key partners, ready to execute following approval to move into the formal delivery phase of the Centre
• final communications, evaluation and impact plans for the Centre
• a fully developed risk management plan
• detailed costs (as approved by delivery partners) for the delivery phase, including staffing costs.

Key criteria against which the delivery of the Centre will be measured will include:

• demonstrable activity and engagement with key local and national stakeholders and sector representatives during the co-development phase and throughout the activities of the Centre to scope, refine and deliver the Centre’s priorities
• evidence that the Centre is supporting better uptake and use of evidence in adult social care, in key areas identified in the co-development phase
• impact of the Centre, for example:
  o greater support for people delivering social care to use evidence in practice to support innovation, and demonstrable evidence of how this is being used to improve outcomes
  o increased capacity locally and regionally to identify and evaluate innovations within adult social care, and at its interfaces with other sectors, to inform local, regional and national policy and practice
  o identifying system-wide approaches, gaps and needs in implementing evidence-based innovations and improvements to inform future investment strategies and ways of working that are relevant to different UK nations
  o development of practice-based models for the adoption and spread of innovation and improvement within adult social care.
• sustainability plans beyond the initial funding period of the Centre.

The funders, along with the Management Board and Programme Advisory Group will work with the Director and leadership team in the co-development and establishment phases to shape and agree the formal monitoring of the Centre’s activities and progress.
The above section relates to the monitoring and evaluation of the Centre. Please see ‘How to Apply’ later in this document for details of selection criteria against which Director and leadership team proposals will be assessed.

6. Call details
This call is to appoint the Centre Director and leadership team who will lead the three phases of the Centre, beginning with the six month co-development phase.

To be considered to lead the Centre you should address the following in your proposal:

- set out the overall ambitions and outcomes for the Centre throughout its three phases, recognising the overarching aim to develop a UK Centre which will lead the way for better implementation of high quality research evidence in adult social care
- explain how the Centre will build on the success of existing initiatives, but also how it will be different in order to overcome current challenges related to evidence implementation in social care
- set out and describe the proposed leadership model, bringing together (but not limited to) knowledge mobilisers, social care practice and people with lived experience of care, and academic expertise. Proposals should include details of how different groups have been actively involved in the development of the bid
- identify key partners and stakeholders for the Centre, reflecting the requirement for both local and national engagement, including working arrangements, and partnership and collaboration models
- identify the broader staffing structure for the Centre including project management, administration and communications expertise
- specify key activities, outputs and outcomes for the co-development phase, including costs for each activity, success measures and reporting mechanisms
- explain how priorities, collaborative ways of working and the delivery model will be refined and finalised during the establishment phases so that the Centre can achieve its aims and outcomes. This should include any assumptions or expectations regarding partnership working
- suggest potential priority areas that the Centre might seek to address in its core work programme, and why. These will be tested with stakeholders during the co-development phase
- propose the delivery model for the Centre, including its physical locations and how it will join up local engagement with national contexts
- detail the mechanism for developing and refining the theory of change for the Centre
- describe the governance and quality control arrangements for the Centre, including the processes for developing the core work programme for the Centre and accompanying delivery plan, costs and KPIs for the Centre, and the ongoing monitoring and reporting of progress.

To be successful, you will be expected to develop novel approaches to the structure of the Centre. In order to achieve the required outcomes, please think beyond a single, centralised model or standalone centres operating in each country of the UK and ensure that the delivery model reflects the breadth of partners and expertise required to deliver the aims of the Centre. You should detail in your proposal how you will develop and test the delivery model for the Centre during the establishment phase.
You should also explain how the design of the Centre, including its core work programme, delivery model and staffing will be responsive to the changing nature of the adult social care sector while offering a longer term strategy to meet the specified outcomes and aims and work towards its sustainability. For example, the Centre should have a strong core team to provide leadership and consistency throughout its duration, but during the co-development phase expertise in stakeholder engagement will be critical. During the establishment phase, experience of setting up a large programme and its associated infrastructure will be needed, while in the delivery phase capability to measure the Centre’s impact will be required. You should explain how you will respond to these varying requirements, which may include temporarily redeploying existing staff in collaborating organisations or making use of sub-contracts to bring in the required expertise on a short-term basis.

The Centre will be locally embedded but also have a UK-wide reach. As such, you should explain how your proposed priority areas and delivery model will reflect both local needs and national priorities in adult social care. Local may mean the policy, political and socio-economic differences and needs across the four nations of the UK and the regions within them, or it may refer to stakeholders and settings specific to the priorities you identify, such as local authorities and providers. Proposals should also demonstrate how the Centre will make outputs accessible to a wide variety of audiences and people with differing levels of need.

Proposals should describe the anticipated working and governance arrangements between the Centre and the relevant organisations in an attachment to the proposal and detail any assumptions or expectations regarding partnership working and contractual relationships. See the Je-S guidance for this call for further information. [www.esrc.ukri.org/uk-centre-to-enhance-adult-social-care/](http://www.esrc.ukri.org/uk-centre-to-enhance-adult-social-care/)

Your proposal should also explain how you will demonstrate progress against the agreed criteria and deliverables in the co-development and establishment phases. You should also describe how the Centre will develop plans to measure and demonstrate its impact in the longer term. In addition, the Centre Director and leadership team will be required to contribute to evaluation activity carried out on behalf of the funders.

We recognise that it may not be possible to specify all outcomes for the Centre at the proposal stage. We ask, therefore, that you are clear in your proposal about how you will maintain flexibility in the development and reporting of learning, progress and outcomes from the different phases of the Centre.

While funding beyond the initial five-year delivery period cannot be anticipated at this stage, if the Centre is successful in its aims it could become sustainable. You should therefore include in your proposal suggestions for how the leadership team could assess the longer-term feasibility and sustainability of the Centre through the delivery phase.

7. **Funding**

The funder contribution is a maximum of £15 million to fund the three phases of the Centre for a total duration of 78 months.

UKRI funding is provided from the Strategic Priorities Fund. The Fund was established to drive an increase in high-quality multi- and interdisciplinary research and innovation, to ensure that UKRI’s investment links up effectively with Government departments’ research
priorities and opportunities, and ensure that the research and innovation system responds to strategic priorities and opportunities.

Proposals should state the 100% full Economic Costs (fEC) of the project and the funders will meet 65% of these costs (unless there are exceptions paid at 100%). The rate of 65% fEC combines ESRC and Health Foundation approaches to funding using an algorithm to reflect ESRC’s standard fEC rate and Health Foundation funding for direct costs of grants.

Government block funding to universities includes a charity support element administered to universities as part of quality-related funding in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, and the Research Excellence Grant in Scotland. Applicants should be eligible to recover a portion of the fEC balance through this support element.

Public Sector Research Establishments (PSREs) are eligible to apply to this call and are recommended to contact the ESRC as early as possible if they foresee any issues arising with the fEC rate that may prevent them from applying.

Please specify the full Economic Costs for the six month co-development phase in the proposal form. We will meet 65% of these costs (unless there are exceptions paid at 100%), jointly contributing up to a maximum of £248,000 for the co-development phase.

The balance must be guaranteed by the lead research organisation. Indexation will be added to the grant for the co-development phase when it is issued; you do not need to include costs for indexation in the proposal form.

We will request detailed costs for the establishment and delivery phases from the appointed Director and leadership team during the co-development and establishment phases. These costs do not need to be provided in your initial proposal form.

The indicative funding for the establishment and delivery phases of the Centre is described below and you must be confident that the phases can be delivered within the stated available funding:

- establishment phase (12 months): £950,000 funder contributions at 65% fEC
- delivery phase (60 months): £13.5 million funder contributions at 65% fEC.

Funding will be directed to supporting people within the Centre and activities that the Centre will undertake. It is not expected that funding will be directed at developing and testing entirely new interventions or routinely funding local evaluations unrelated to the Centre’s implementation activities.

Costs for business, third sector or government collaborators and the involvement of people with lived experience of social care

You should budget for the involvement of social care research, evidence, practice and policy stakeholders and those with lived experience of social care and include details of collaborations in their proposal. Justified eligible costs for business, third sector, government or public co-investigators will be paid at 100%; however, the costs associated with these types of co-Investigator contributions should not usually exceed 30% of the overall cost of the grant (at 100% fEC).

For the purposes of this call and to reflect the requirement for involvement of relevant social care stakeholders, it may be allowable to exceed the 30% cap. If you anticipate
exceeding the 30% cap you should contact the ESRC before submitting your proposal, and you will be required to provide suitable justification as an attachment to the proposal. Collaborators can also be included in the proposal as project partners where they will make specific additional financial or in-kind contributions to the Centre. Please refer to the Je-S guidance notes for this call. www.esrc.ukri.org/uk-centre-to-enhance-adult-social-care/

**Management of the Centre**

You should also be able to explain how the proposed programme of activities and its outputs will be managed and the role and function of any advisory or management groups in the proposal.

The amount of time required to be spent on the grant by the Director and leadership team may be costed into the proposal. The Director of the Centre will be the principal investigator of the grant and must be employed or hosted by an eligible research organisation. We recognise that candidates for Director are likely to have existing commitments. Proposals should explain how the Director will provide effective leadership throughout the life of the Centre and how the Director and leadership team will ensure sufficient time to lead the centre and deliver the required activities, particularly during the co-development and establishment phases.

**8. Research ethics**

The funders require that the work supported is designed and carried out to a high ethical standard, it meets our core principles and is subject to proper professional and institutional oversight in terms of research governance.

We expect applicants to have thought about the potential ethical implications of their proposal during the lifecycle of the project, how these will be addressed, what measures will be taken for ongoing review, what type of ethics review is required and how the review will be secured.

Proposals should comply with the ESRC Framework for Research Ethics. Further details about the Framework for Research Ethics and guidance on compliance (together with links to other web based resources on research ethics) may be found at www.esrc.ukri.org/funding/guidance-for-applicants/research-ethics/.

**9. Eligibility**

The call is open to applicants from across the UK. The Centre Director (principal investigator) must be based at a research organisation eligible to receive UKRI research council funding (www.ukri.org/funding/how-to-apply/eligibility/). Applicant organisations must be registered on the UKRI’s Joint Electronic Submission (Je-S) System (https://je-s.rcuk.ac.uk/).

Public Sector Research Establishments are eligible to apply for this call. If PSREs wishing to apply have not previously applied for UKRI funding and are not currently designated IRO status they will be required to complete an eligibility form to ensure they have the required research capacity, systems and controls in place to manage the research and grant funding. PSRE applicants should contact ESRC at the earliest opportunity to discuss their interests in
applying. Please ensure sufficient time to create Je-S accounts for investigators who do not currently have one.

10. Governance arrangements for the initiative
We are establishing governance arrangements for the funding and monitoring of the Centre. This includes a Management Board and an independent Programme Advisory Group.

Management Board
The Management Board is the executive decision-making body for the programme. It will approve strategic decisions regarding budget and spend and oversee the high-level strategic delivery of the investment by the funders.

The Director of the Centre will report to the Management Board and attend all or part of its biannual meetings in a ‘non-voting’ capacity. Membership of the Management Board and Programme Advisory Group will be published on the ESRC website.

Programme Advisory Group
The Programme Advisory Group provides independent advice to the Management Board and funders on programme direction, policy context, alignment with other initiatives, and monitoring and evaluation of the Centre’s activities. It will also advise on whether specific grant conditions have been satisfactorily met.

Governance for the Centre’s activities
The Centre leadership team will be expected to establish its own governance arrangements, including advisory structures.

11. How to apply

Intention to submit
Please complete an Intention to Submit summarising the people and partners to be involved in the proposal and how the aims of the call will be addressed. It is not a requirement to provide an Intention to Submit in order to apply to this call, but you are strongly encouraged to complete this. The Intention to Submit has been designed to support you with the development of your proposal and we will provide feedback to applicants on eligibility and fit to call where appropriate.

An intention to submit (ItS) should be submitted via web form by no later than 16:00 on 22 November 2019.

Please note:
- you will be able to start working on your full proposal while working on your ItS
- we will provide feedback to ItS on eligibility and fit to call if appropriate
- only one ItS should be submitted per proposal
- the ItS must be submitted by the principal investigator.

Full proposals
Proposals should be made via the UK Research and Innovation Joint Electronic Submission (Je-S) System (https://je-s.rcuk.ac.uk/) and submitted to the ESRC by no later than 16:00
on 29 January 2020. They must be costed and approved by the relevant institutional authority before submission.

The Je-S guidance notes for applicants provide details on the information that you will be required to submit as part of your proposal: www.esrc.ukri.org/uk-centre-to-enhance-adult-social-care/. All applicants should consult the ESRC Research Funding Guide: www.esrc.ukri.org/funding/guidance-for-applicants/research-funding-guide/ which sets out the rules and regulations governing funding.

Assessment of full proposals
The Director and leadership team will be appointed through a commissioning process which will include peer review and an expert Commissioning Panel. The panel membership and peer review will include a range of relevant expertise and research disciplines, sector stakeholders and people with lived experience of social care. Anonymised reviewer comments will be sent to applicants for written response, before consideration by the panel.

If your proposal is shortlisted by the Commissioning Panel you will be invited for interview on 3 June 2020 by members of the Panel. Following the interview, the Panel will make a funding recommendation to the Management Board and funders, who will make the final funding decision.

Selection criteria
Proposals will be assessed on quality and contribution to the aims of the call.

The Commissioning Panel will use the following criteria to assess proposals:
- fit with the call
- a clear understanding of the context and challenges of knowledge mobilisation and implementation in complex systems and the ability to bring a new approach to address these challenges in adult social care
- experience, expertise and connection of the proposed leadership team to national and local contexts and stakeholders in adult social care across the UK
- inclusion of the required leadership and partner expertise to deliver the Centre’s co-development phase
- feasibility of the proposed approach to deliver the desired outputs and impacts from the Centre, including the delivery model for the Centre and the ability to incorporate specific skills and expertise when needed
- approach to stakeholder engagement
- approach to developing a theory of change for the Centre
- approach to monitoring Centre activities and measuring its own impact
- capacity to deliver the project on time, on budget and to the required standard.

12. Commissioning timetable

- Full guidance published – 29 October 2019
- Intention to submit deadline – 16:00 on 22 November 2019
- Deadline to submit proposals – 16:00 on 29 January 2020
- Deadline for applicant’s response to reviewer comments – 25 March 2020
- Interviews – 3 June 2020
- Funding decisions announced – July 2020

13. Contacts

For further information about the call please contact:

Hannah Oliver (01793 442 825) or Hannah Sharp (01793 413 081)
Email: esrcsocialcare@esrc.ukri.org

For queries relating to the Joint Electronic Submission (Je-S) System please contact the Je-S Helpdesk: jeshelp@je-s.ukri.org or phone: +44 (0) 1793 44 4164