Details about the UK Centre for Evidence Implementation in Adult Social Care call, including the call specification and Je-S guidance notes for applicants, can be found on the ESRC website: [www.esrc.ukri.org/uk-centre-to-enhance-adult-social-care/](http://www.esrc.ukri.org/uk-centre-to-enhance-adult-social-care/)

Please refer to those documents in the first instance for all queries.

Please note that this document may be updated to reflect those questions most frequently raised with the ESRC and the Health Foundation. It is highly recommended that potential applicants review the online version of this document on the ESRC website (rather than a saved or cached version) before contacting the ESRC for advice.

Last updated: December 2019.

*New questions are marked with an asterisk.*
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**What is the Health Foundation?**

The Health Foundation is an independent charity committed to bringing about better health and healthcare for people in the UK.

Our aim is a healthier population, supported by high quality healthcare that can be equitably accessed. We learn what works to make people’s lives healthier and improve the healthcare system. From giving grants to those working at the front line to carrying out research and policy analysis, we shine a light on how to make successful change happen.

We make links between the knowledge we gain from working with those delivering health and healthcare and our research and analysis. Our aspiration is to create a virtuous circle, using what we know works on the ground to inform effective policymaking and vice versa.

We believe good health and healthcare are key to a flourishing society. Through sharing what we learn, collaborating with others and building people’s skills and knowledge, we aim to make a difference and contribute to a healthier population.

For more information visit the Health Foundation website: [www.health.org.uk/](http://www.health.org.uk/)

**What is the Economic and Social Research Council?**

ESRC is part of UK Research and Innovation (UKRI), an organisation that brings together the UK’s seven research councils, Innovate UK and Research England to maximise the contribution of each council and create the best environment for research and innovation to flourish. The vision is to ensure the UK maintains its world-leading position in research and innovation. For more information visit the UK Research and Innovation website: [www.ukri.org/](http://www.ukri.org/)

UK Research and Innovation is a non-departmental public body funded by a grant-in-aid from the UK government.

ESRC is the UK’s largest organisation for funding research on economic and social issues. We support independent, high quality research which has an impact on business, the public sector and civil society. ESRC’s total budget for 2017-18 was around £202 million. At any one time ESRC supports over 4,000 researchers and postgraduate students in academic institutions and independent research institutes.

*How engaged are the funders at each stage of development and delivery of the Centre?*

Both the Health Foundation and ESRC are committed to supporting the success of the Centre and will maintain oversight of the joint investment and its delivery. The funders will be primarily engaged through the governance arrangements for the Centre. During the co-development and establishment of the Centre, there may be additional oversight through the governance arrangements to ensure there is UK wide engagement, that key stakeholder groups have been included, and that appropriate priorities and delivery mechanisms are developed.

The funders will work with the Director and leadership team to support the smooth delivery of the Centre and we expect the leadership team to demonstrate
appropriate progress at each stage of the Centre before the next phase of funding is released.

**How is the Centre different from past and existing initiatives in adult social care?**

The main activities and outcomes of the Centre will be to 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 will share learning from implementation to increase the uptake, adoption, scaling and spread of innovations and improvements in adult social care. It will also connect with stakeholders to complement existing initiatives, and lead new approaches working with partners and stakeholders to address the challenges and barriers to the use of evidence in 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 in a unique leadership and partnership model, putting the experiences and perspectives of people delivering and in receipt of social care at the heart of the programme.

The Centre will develop the priority areas for its programme of work and its delivery model in consultation with local, regional and national stakeholders and establish collaborative ways of working before commencing its delivery phase. A novel delivery model will be designed to support local engagement and involvement in each country of the UK while reflecting local capacity, collaborative working and UK-wide outcomes within the funding available.

The Centre may need to carry out some limited research, synthesis and dissemination activity to support the use of evidence and deliver its aims, but it will not be focused on research and dissemination.

**Why is the focus of the Centre on implementation?**

Feedback from stakeholders during our scoping for this call specified that while mobilisation of evidence into usable formats was important, the ongoing challenge lies in the adoption or implementation of existing evidence into frontline practice.

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

*Where innovative practice is identified by the Centre, where would the funding for local implementation and evaluation come from?*

We anticipate that funding for implementation and evaluation will be provided by local partners, and not by the Centre. This should be reflected in the collaboration and delivery model for the Centre.
Will the Centre carry out primary research, evidence synthesis and dissemination?

The primary aim of the Centre is to support the implementation of evidence into practice within adult social care. We do not expect the Centre to undertake large-scale synthesis of the existing evidence base, nor develop significant primary research programmes. However, we recognise the Centre will need to bring together current good practice and learning, and carry out some limited research, synthesis and dissemination activity to support the use of evidence and meet its aims and objectives. We also anticipate the Centre will evaluate its own activities and develop a broader understanding of evidence implementation in adult social care across the UK.

Examples of relevant activities may include: work to prepare existing evidence in useable formats to support implementation; research to understand and overcome barriers to implementation; or work to supplement the evidence base in order to support implementation.

It is also worth noting the Centre is part of a broader package of funding going into the sector from a number of different funders. We do not necessarily expect all of the evidence to be available now but anticipate over time that more evidence will appear during the lifetime of the Centre. The Centre should develop appropriate mechanisms to connect with the existing and emerging evidence base.

The Centre Director and leadership team should identify the most suitable approaches for achieving these outcomes.

Who is the audience for the Centre?

The Centre is seeking to reach audiences including people with a lived experience of social care (such as those receiving care, carers, family and friends, and organisations that represent them), the existing adult social care workforce in the UK, the wider academic community in relevant disciplines, and a wide variety of lay audiences. It should share learning from its activities with organisations that provide guidance and resources on innovations and improvements to those working in adult social care, such as NICE and similar organisations in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.

What types of organisations will the Centre be expected to include?

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. The Centre must work across the UK and demonstrate the involvement of organisations that will ensure UK-wide coverage.

What is meant by ‘local’ in this call?

The Centre must have UK-wide coverage and outcomes, and in order to achieve its aims it
will need to be sensitive to local contexts, challenges and legislation. In this call we use the term ‘local’ broadly and it may refer to 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. Applicants should describe the local contexts and stakeholders relevant to their proposal and explain how the Centre will connect local engagement and national outcomes.

*What do you mean by regional and local in the context of the Centre?*

In order not to constrain the design and delivery of the Centre, we have deliberately chosen not to define the concepts of regional and local. It 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. We would expect the Centre Director and leadership to explain their use of these concepts in proposals where appropriate.

**Why is the Centre being funded in three phases?**

It is important for the Director and leadership team to agree and refine the priority areas for the programme of work, and the delivery model for the Centre, with relevant stakeholders and partners. The Centre must be action and impact-focused throughout its delivery phase. The co-development and establishment phases will ensure that the Director and leadership have time to engage the required stakeholders, agree contractual arrangements and put in place the structure of the Centre so that the work programme can begin from the start of the delivery phase.

The phasing of the Centre includes formal reviews of progress and deliverables in the co-development and establishment phases, when the Management Board will approve continuation of funding into the next phase.

**Will the Centre be hosted by a single research organisation?**

Applicants are asked to describe the potential delivery model in their proposal and how they will refine and implement the model working with relevant stakeholders and partners in the co-development and establishment phases. We expect that a novel structure will be required to engage relevant audiences and deliver the aims of the Centre, and this is likely to require a collaborative approach rather than locating the Centre within a single physical location. Applicants are encouraged to 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 and capacity of partners and expertise required to deliver the aims of the Centre.

**Are there particular priority areas the Centre must address?**

We do not want to inhibit innovative thinking by being prescriptive about priority areas, however some focusing of priorities will be required. In order to be sensitive to national and regional priorities, the Centre is expected to have a number of foci in terms of priority groups and topics, and these should be outlined in the proposal. Priorities will be refined by the Centre Director and leadership team during the co-development phase, in collaboration with relevant stakeholders and partners.
What do you mean by the terms ‘user’ and ‘stakeholder’?

‘Users’ and ‘stakeholders’ are individuals, groups or organisations who have an interest in or may benefit from the programme. Users may be from the public sector, private sector, civil society or the wider public in general. Engaging users in your project from its conception and development through to the dissemination stage is likely to increase the impacts achieved.

What evidence of engagement with users will be required?

The proposal should include a mandatory **UK stakeholder engagement plan attachment** in which you explain plans and approaches for identifying and engaging the required stakeholders in the design, establishment and delivery of the Centre. The attachment should describe the anticipated working and governance arrangements between the Centre and the relevant organisations and name key partners and stakeholders in all four countries of the UK. See the [Je-S guidance for this call](#) for further information.

*What is the distinction between the Programme Advisory Group and the governance that you expect the Centre to set up?*

The Programme Advisory Group has been established to provide independent advice to the funders and Management Board in the commissioning and delivery of the Centre. We expect the Centre to also establish advisory structures to provide advice, guidance and support to the Centre Director and leadership team. We will work with the Centre Director and leadership team to ensure advisory structures are complementary.

What was the purpose of the engagement events and webinar?

The engagement events aimed to bring together potential applicants to discuss the initiative with representatives from the Health Foundation and ESRC, to explore some of the challenges we are aiming to address, and to build the necessary networks and partnerships needed to develop the Centre and achieve its aims.

The format of the events was a combination of talks, open discussion with Q&A and a networking opportunity.

The webinar provided information about the call and covered any frequently asked questions.

Did I have to complete an Intention to Submit?

It was not a requirement to provide an Intention to Submit in order to apply to this call, but applicants were strongly encouraged to complete this.

Are full proposals submitted through a standard UKRI/ESRC submission process (through Je-S)?

Yes the call will be operated through Je-S and we will highlight any variations from our usual funding rules in the call guidance.
Will there be limits on the number of proposals that a research organisation can submit?

No, there will be no restrictions on the number of proposals that one organisation can submit or be involved in, although there is one award so any proposals will be in competition with each other. Organisations may wish to use internal demand management in deciding on proposals to submit.

Is there any flexibility on the start date?

The Centre must begin its co-development phase in October 2020. The three months flexibility on start date usually allowed for ESRC grants will not apply to the Centre.

Who is eligible to apply?

The call is open to applicants from across the UK. The Centre Director (principal investigator) must be based at a research organisation eligible for Research Council funding: [www.ukri.org/funding/how-to-apply/eligibility/](http://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/](https://je-s.rcuk.ac.uk/).

Public Sector Research Establishments (PSREs) and Independent Research Organisations with UKRI designated IRO status are eligible to apply for this call as it is partly funded by the Strategic Priorities Fund. If PSREs wishing to apply have not previously applied for UKRI funding and are not currently designated Independent Research Organisation 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.

*Does the Director need to be an academic and have direct employment with the research organisation?*

The Centre Director (principal investigator - PI) must be based at a research organisation eligible for Research Council funding ([www.ukri.org/funding/how-to-apply/eligibility/](http://www.ukri.org/funding/how-to-apply/eligibility/)) and the lead organisation must have a contract with the PI for the duration of the project. We do not have specific qualification requirements, but the PI is required to have the appropriate skills for the project and demonstrate sufficient capacity to deliver the programme.

*Is the Director expected to work full-time on the leadership of the initiative?*

We recognise that the proposed Director will have existing commitments. As part of the application we will need assurance that the individual will be able to commit properly to the work and devote enough time to ensure the success of the Centre, but they do not have work full-time on the leadership of the Centre.

Time commitments may vary over the different phases of the Centre but should be adequate throughout the duration and made clear in the proposal. A larger time commitment may be required from the Director in the development and establishment phases, to enable them to lead on refining the Centre’s collaboration arrangements, priorities and delivery model.

*Can applicants or organisations be part of more than one application?*
Yes, applicants can appear on more than one bid.

**Why is the grant for the Centre funded at 65% full Economic Cost (fEC)?**

The 65% rate is calculated using an algorithm which combines the proportion of costs usually met by each funder (ESRC usually meet 80% of fEC and Health Foundation, as a charity, usually pay the direct costs of grants). Proposals should state the 100% fEC and the funders will meet 65% of the eligible costs (unless there are justified exceptions paid at 100%). The Je-S proposal form has been set up to show costs at 100% and 65%. Applicants should specify the costs for the six month co-development phase only in the proposal form.

**Who pays the balance of the grant costs between 65% fEC and 100% fEC?**

The balance must be guaranteed by the lead research organisation. 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.

*Should we submit a proposal for the full 7 years of the Centre or just for the co-development stage?*

The current call is to appoint the Centre Director and leadership team, who will lead the three phases of the Centre, beginning with the co-development phase. Proposals should describe the overall aims and ambitions for the Centre as a whole and specify the activities, outputs and outcomes for the co-development phase. The initial grant awarded will cover the costs for the six-month co-development phase, beginning in October 2020.

**How much funding is available for the co-development phase (October 2020 to March 2021)?**

A maximum joint-funder contribution of £248,000 is available for the six-month co-development phase. This is the maximum amount that the funders will jointly pay towards 65% of the eligible costs and exceptions paid at 100%. Indexation will be added to the grant when it is issued and does not need to be built into the proposal costs.

**How much funding is available for the establishment phase (April 2021 to March 2022) and delivery phase (April 2022 to March 2027) and when will the proposal be considered?**

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.
This call will appoint the Director and leadership team who will lead the three phases of the Centre and receive an initial grant for the six-month co-development phase. We will request proposals and costs for the establishment and delivery phases from the appointed Director as part of the formal reviews during the co-development and establishment phases. Funding for the subsequent phases of the Centre will be added to the grant, subject to formal reviews.

**How will indexation be applied to each phase of funding?**

The research councils add indexation to the costs in the proposal form before offer letters for grants are sent out. This reflects the potential for inflation of costs in the time between submission of the proposal and the costs being incurred.

Indexation will be applied to the costs for the co-development phase and the delivery phase of the Centre. Therefore the total ESRC contribution requested for the co-development phase (including any justified exceptions costs paid at 100%) must not exceed £248,000 to allow for the inclusion of these indexation costs. Indexation is applied at the rates agreed by UK Research and Innovation: [www.ukri.org/funding/information-for-award-holders/indexation-rates/](http://www.ukri.org/funding/information-for-award-holders/indexation-rates/)

Indexation will not be applied to the costs for the establishment phase as the costs for this phase will be submitted within a short time of being incurred.

*How much of the funding is allocated to the central leadership team and how much is available for potential partners?*

Applicants should decide and justify how the funding is assigned in order to meet the aims of the call. Please also refer to the question on costs for business, third sector, government and public co-investigators.

**What grant conditions will the Centre be subject to?**

The UK’s Economic and Social Research Council is administering the call for proposals on behalf of UKRI and the Health Foundation. The Centre will be subject to the UK Research and Innovation conditions: [www.ukri.org/funding/information-for-award-holders/grant-terms-and-conditions/](http://www.ukri.org/funding/information-for-award-holders/grant-terms-and-conditions/), but with relevant amendments to ensure the successful project meets the call aims and objectives.

**Are collaborators from non-academic organisations and members of the public eligible to act as Co-Investigators?**

Collaborators from an established business, civil society or government body or relevant members of the public based in the UK will be eligible to be listed as a co-investigator.

Members of the public and people with lived experience of social care may be listed as co-investigators where they have a relevant contribution to make. All co-investigators must hold a Je-S account.

Please see the Je-S guidance for this call for more information on how to include these costs in your proposal.
At what rate will business, third sector, government or public co-investigators be funded?

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% full Economic Costs). Please see ESRC guidance on eligible costs for these co-investigators.

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. Applicants who anticipate exceeding the 30% cap should contact the ESRC before submitting their proposal, and they will be required to provide additional justification in the proposal.

Are international organisations eligible to receive funding through this call?

International co-investigators are not eligible under this call. Please see the Je-S guidance for this call for more information about the ways in which international experts can be involved in and receive funding through the grant, depending on the role the organisation will play in the project.

*What are the expectations regarding the inclusion of international learning and how this is translated to the UK national and regional context?

While international organisations are not eligible to apply to this call, there is scope for learning from other international comparative work. It would be up to the Director and Leadership team to agree and refine the areas for the programme of work with relevant stakeholders and partners. Please see the Je-S guidance for this call for more information about the ways in which international experts can be involved in and receive funding through the grant, depending on the role the organisation will play in the project.

Are associated studentships eligible for this call?

Associated studentships are not eligible under this call.

*What attachments can we provide with the application?

Details of the attachments eligible for inclusion with your proposal are provided on page 14 of the Je-S guidance document. Diagrams may be included in attachments and must be incorporated within the page limits specified in the guidance.

What Letters of Support are required?

If including Project Partners, a letter of support will be required detailing the involvement of all individuals.

Exceptionally other letters of support can be submitted as part of a proposal; provided they are essential to the successful conduct of the project (such as confirming access to datasets, or confirming access to or use of the facilities provided by named organisations). General letters of support that are not essential for the successful conduct of the programme or do
not confirm any specific contribution to the project should not be included.

**How should CVs be added to the proposal?**

Please include CVs in one single PDF document (two A4 sides maximum for each CV) to make access to this information easier.

**When should I include a Final/Interim report with my proposal?**

A maximum of one page of A4 is required, per interim report, for current ESRC live grants awarded to the members of the applicant team (Principal Investigators and Co-Investigators). ESRC does not require reports for grants that have finished or closed.

Interim reports should be provided for all PIs and Co-Is, these should be brief, a maximum of one page of A4. These reports provide evidence of the current research proficiency of members of the research team, also providing an opportunity to highlight any notable impacts of the projects for which they are currently engaged.

**Assessment Process**

**Who will be involved in making the decision to select the Director and leadership team for the Centre?**

The Director and leadership team will be appointed through a carefully managed 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.

Applicants submitting proposals deemed of sufficient quality and value for money will be invited for interview by members of the Commissioning Panel, and following this the panel will make a funding recommendation to the Management Board and funders, who make the final funding decision.

**If my proposal is shortlisted for interview, can I bring co-investigators or other collaborators to the interview?**

Yes you will be able to bring other collaborators with you. We will provide guidance on how many people and who you can bring with you if you are invited for interview.

**Further information about the Centre**

**How can my organisation collaborate with the Centre?**

Organisations will have the opportunity to network at the engagement events. The attendee details will be shared with those attending for engagement events (where consent has been given). We cannot facilitate networking and the building of collaborations directly.

In addition, there will be opportunities for engagement during the co-development phase of
the Centre when the appointed Director and leadership team will work with stakeholders and partners to agree priorities, build partnerships and develop the delivery model for the Centre.

**What are the expectations for sustainability of the Centre (beyond its initial funding period)?**

Continued funding for the Centre beyond its initial delivery phase cannot be guaranteed, however the funders expect that the appointed Director and leadership team will explore the justification and potential for sustainability of the Centre, perhaps through further core funding or through a self-sustaining model.

Sustainability plans beyond the initial funding period of the Centre is one of the criteria that the delivery of the Centre is likely to be measured against. It should be considered from the outset and built into the design and delivery of the Centre as it is more challenging for large programmes to become sustainable later on.

We recognise that it may not be possible to detail sustainability plans at the proposal stage, and 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.

**Where do I go for further information?**

Please refer to the full call guidance documents 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/)