

Primary Care Research Seed Funding Award

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Purpose of the Award

The **Primary Care Research Seed Funding Award** is intended to contribute to the pipeline of clinical trials in Irish Primary Care. It will fund two projects up to a value of €10,000 each (plus overheads at 25%, or €2,500), which have the potential to be highly impactful and successful in leveraging larger scale research funding in the future. The Award will focus on the current MRC framework for the development and evaluation of complex interventions [1] (see **Figure 1** below).

This round of funding will focus on projects that align with the Top Ten research priorities for the management of chronic conditions in primary care.

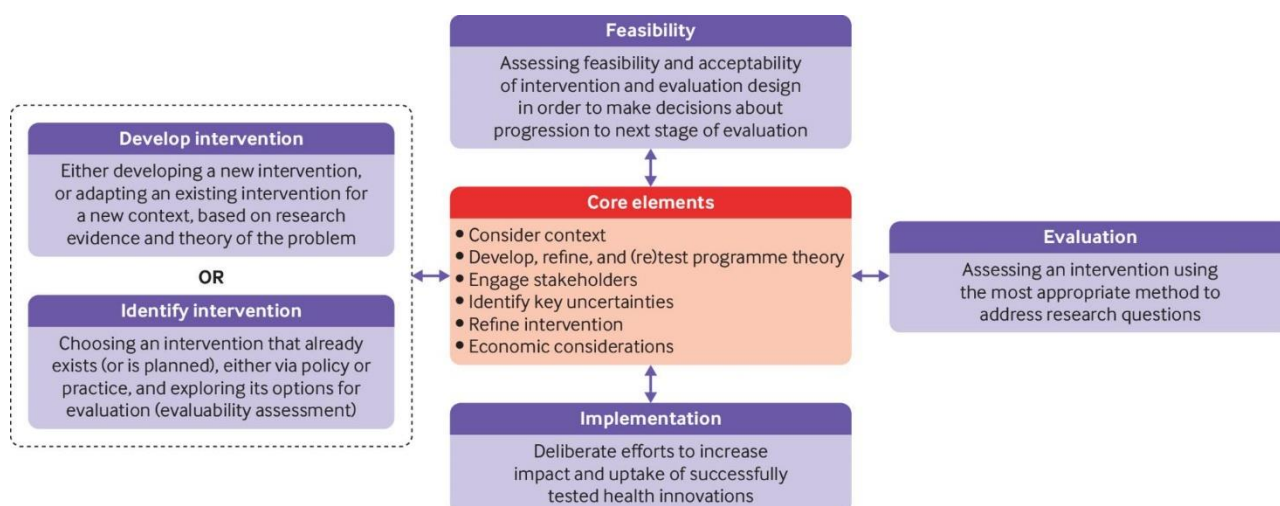


Figure 1. MRC framework for developing and evaluating complex interventions. [1]

Proposed projects may aim to **identify or develop an intervention**, detailing how the core elements of the MRC framework will be considered. Proposals should identify a pathway to the future acquisition of funding to assess feasibility of the intervention, and (in the longer term) evaluation and implementation of the intervention. Specific funding sources should be identified.

Projects may also aim to **redevelop or refine an intervention** which has already been the subject of a feasibility study. These projects should aim to address any identified issues with feasibility, with reference to the core elements of the MRC framework. In these cases, the proposal should clearly outline why further feasibility or piloting is required, and identify a pathway to the future acquisition of funding to evaluate the intervention, and (in the longer term) implement the intervention. Specific funding sources should be identified.

[1] Skivington K, Matthews L, Simpson S A, Craig P, Baird J, Blazeby J M et al. A new framework for developing and evaluating complex interventions: update of Medical Research Council guidance BMJ 2021; 374 :n2061
doi:10.1136/bmj.n2061

Research Priorities for Managing Chronic Conditions in Primary Care

Submissions for this round of funding should align with the [Top Ten list](#), as developed through the James Lind Alliance priority setting partnership carried out by the HRB Primary Care CTNI.

Top Ten lists highlight important areas of research that have been deemed high priority by patients, carers, and clinicians with first-hand experience of managing chronic conditions. To find out more about priority setting partnership and how this list was developed, please visit the James Lind Alliance [website](#).

The Top Ten list, formed of questions developed and ranked by these stakeholders, sets out the areas of interest rather than suggesting specific research questions.

Applicants should indicate which priority question(s) their submission aligns to, and describe how their proposed study will expand the evidence base and make a meaningful contribution towards a future answer.

1	How can exchange of information be improved between specialist/hospital services and primary care for both people with chronic conditions and healthcare professionals?
2	What non-drug treatments for managing chronic conditions (e.g., exercise and other lifestyle changes, physical therapies, talk therapies) could be integrated into primary care services instead of or in addition to medications?
3	How can a multidisciplinary approach (e.g. the involvement of a mix of health care professionals) be implemented when managing chronic conditions in primary care?
4	How can primary health care data be used to inform chronic condition management, both in the care of individual patients and in the delivery of services more broadly?
5	In what ways can primary care understand and address patient and family/carer treatment burden, i.e., the work people have to do to manage chronic conditions and the impact that has?
6	What is the best way to ensure appropriate and timely access to Irish primary care services for people managing chronic conditions?
7	How can primary care services best manage the complexities of caring for people with multiple chronic conditions (across the lifespan)?
8	How can people with chronic conditions be best supported to engage with and navigate health and social care information and services?
9	What is the best way to support continuity of care for people with chronic conditions within primary care, including continuity in their relationships with primary care professionals and in the management and coordination of their care?
10	How can primary care services support good mental health and wellbeing for people managing chronic conditions and symptoms?

Timeline

This call opens in January 2025, and will close to applications at 5pm on Tuesday the 4th of February 2025.

Final funding decisions will be made in early February.

All applicants will be contacted regarding the outcome by email. Successful applicants will be asked to liaise with their host institution research office at their earliest convenience to begin the contracting process. See Appendix 1 for a funding contract template.

The maximum project duration is 12 months, with a latest possible start date of August 2025. Funding for this scheme is through core funding for the HRB Primary Care CTNI, currently funded through November 2026, and all seed funding projects must be completed and reported on prior to September 2026. Submissions will be assessed on the likelihood of achieving this timeline (see Assessment Criteria below).

Assessment Criteria

Reviewers will assess each applicant's submission and CV, and score based on the following criteria and weightings:

<p>Expertise in Primary Care Research Does the Lead Applicant (and Co-Lead Applicant, where applicable) have sufficient experience and expertise in primary care research, and access to adequate support? (Application Section 3)</p>	15 points
<p>Proposed Study Has the applicant proposed a potentially impactful study, with an appropriate methodology, that is achievable within the stated timeframe? (Application Section 4)</p>	30 points
<p>Research Priorities for Managing Chronic Conditions in Primary Care Does the proposed study make a meaningful contribution in addressing an identified research priority in managing chronic conditions in primary care? (Application Section 5)</p>	20 points
<p>Patient and Public Involvement Are the plans for patient and public involvement reflective of best practice? (Application Section 6)</p>	20 points
<p>Pathway to Future Funding Has the applicant justified how success in the current application will create a pathway to securing a substantial funding award in the future? (Application Section 7)</p>	15 points

Budget and Allowable Costs

This Award will fund projects to a maximum of €10,000 (plus overheads at 25% or €2,500). Allowable costs that can be included are detailed here.

Funds are administered through the approved HRB Host Institutions only: see HRB Policy on Approval of Host Institutions available here: <https://www.hrb.ie/funding/grant-management/grant-policies/>

Salary (salary, PRSI, pension contribution)

Applicants may use some or all of the budget to employ research staff. Applicants should use the IUA website for the most up-to-date recommended salary scales for academic researchers (<http://www.iua.ie/research-innovation/researcher-salary-scales/>). Please note employee pension contribution of 5% has already been incorporated into the IUA gross salary figure. Please state the pay scale used and the level and point on the scale. This should be justified accordingly.

The Primary Care CTNI does not provide funding for the salary or benefits of full-time academic staff within research institutions who are already receiving salary or benefits. The Primary Care CTNI does not provide a salary or buy-out time for collaborators. Employer's contributions to PRSI and/or national insurance should be at the appropriate rates.

Pension provision up to a maximum of 20% of gross salary will be paid to the host institution to enable compliance with the Employment Control Framework (an additional 5% employee contribution are part of the salary). The level of employer contribution should be in accordance with the model adopted by the host institution.

Running Costs

For all costs required to carry out the activities (e.g. software, design costs etc). Funding for small items of equipment can be included in this section. Standalone computers will not be funded. All costs must be inclusive of VAT, where applicable.

Dissemination

This covers costs associated with article processing fees, seminar/conference attendance (provide details of name and location, where possible), and any other means of communicating outcomes or engaging with stakeholders.

Overhead Contribution

In accordance with the HRB Policy on Overhead Usage, the Primary Care CTNI will contribute to the indirect costs of the research through an overhead payment of 25% of Total Direct Modified Costs. The overhead contribution includes the following items: recruitment costs, office space, and software.

Lead Applicant & Co-Lead Applicant Eligibility

Lead Applicant Eligibility

The Lead Applicant will serve as the point of contact for the Primary Care CTNI during the review process, and on the award if successful. She/he will have primary fiduciary responsibility and accountability for carrying out the research within the funding limits awarded, and in accordance with the terms and conditions of the award.

The Lead Applicant must have the expertise, competencies, and experience to successfully deliver the proposed study. They must justify within the application that they have adequate support in research design, statistics, health economics, and other areas of importance to primary care research.

A Lead Applicant must fulfil one of the following criteria:

1. Hold a post (permanent or contract that covers the duration of the award) in a HRB-recognised Host Institution as an independent investigator. For clinicians, an adjunct position in a HRB-recognised Host Institution is acceptable.
or
2. Be a contract researcher recognised by the Host Institution as an independent investigator who will have a dedicated office and research space for the duration of award, for which he/she will be fully responsible.

Co-Lead Applicant Eligibility

Where a healthcare practitioner wishes to lead an application but does not meet either criterion 1 or 2 above for a Lead Applicant, they may be designated as a **Co-Lead Applicant**.

A Co-Lead Applicant must fulfil both of the following criteria:

1. Be a practising healthcare practitioner in the Republic of Ireland or Northern Ireland.
and
2. Have sufficient expertise, competencies, and experience to meaningfully contribute to the success of the proposed study.

Appendix 1 - Contract Template

SUBAWARD AGREEMENT

This Agreement dated _____ is between:

- (1) National University of Ireland, Galway (the "**UNIVERSITY OF GALWAY**"), an academic institution established under statute in Ireland, whose principal address is at University Road, Galway, Ireland and
- (2) [Institution] (the "**Sub-Awardee**"), an academic institution established under statute in Ireland, whose principal address is at [address]

(each a "Party" or collectively "Parties")

Background:

- A. University of Galway are the lead research partner on the Project funded by the Health Research Board (HRB).
- B. In accordance with their role as lead research partner on the Project, University of Galway released a call within the scope of the Project for applications for Primary Care Research Seed Funding with the successful applicant receiving funding for the Sub-Project.
- C. An application was made by the Researcher, an employee of the Sub-Awardee, to conduct the programme of work as described in the project plan in Schedule 2 to be led on the Sub-Awardee's behalf by the Researcher.
- D. This application was successful and the Parties are desirous of entering into this Agreement to set out the rights and obligations and terms and conditions applicable to the Funding awarded to the Sub-Awardee for the implementation of the Sub-Project.

In consideration of the Sub-Awardee performing the Sub-Project, University of Galway and the Sub-Awardee hereby agree as follows:

1. Interpretation

Background	means any Intellectual Property in the same or related fields to the Project, developed, owned, licensed to or otherwise controlled by a Party prior to the Effective Date or generated by that Party independently of the Sub-Project and, in each case, made available by that Party for use in connection with the Sub-Project.
Commencement Date	The commencement date as set out in Error! Reference source not found.2.
Completion Date	The completion date as set out in Error! Reference source not found.2.
Foreground	All Intellectual Property created or generated by the Sub-Awardee in the performance of the Sub-Project
Funder	Health Research Board (HRB)
Funding	The funding to be paid to the Sub-Awardee by University of Galway in respect of the Sub-Project as set out in Schedule 3.
Grant	The grant from the Funder to University of Galway for the purpose of carrying out the Project and its associated terms and conditions.

Intellectual Property	All intellectual property of any description including copyright, trademarks, database rights, design rights, patents, utility models, and applications for, and the right to apply for any of the foregoing items
Project	The programme of work to be carried out by University of Galway under the Grant entitled "Primary Care Clinical Trials Network Ireland".
Researcher	Prof Walter Cullen the lead researcher from the Sub-Awardee for the Sub-Project.
Sub-Award	The funding awarded by this Agreement and being the terms, conditions, warranties and obligations set out in this Agreement and the schedules hereto together with any binding variation thereof.
Sub-Project	The programme of work to be carried out by the Sub-Awardee as described in the project plan in Schedule 2.

2. Scope of the Project

- 2.1 *Sub-Project:* The Sub-Awardee shall carry out the Sub-Project according to the project plan described in **Error! Reference source not found.** and shall carry out the activities which it is specified to perform in connection with the Sub-Project in a timely manner and generally accepted good practice. The Sub-Awardee shall maintain a complete and accurate record of the activities carried out under the Sub-Project.
- 2.2 *Duration:* The Sub-Project shall be carried out from the Commencement Date until the Completion Date or until such later date as may be agreed in writing between the Parties, or until it is terminated in accordance with the terms of this Agreement unless agree otherwise between the Parties.
- 2.3 *Grant.* The Sub-Awardee acknowledges that University of Galway is bound by the terms and conditions of the Grant, and agrees to cooperate with University of Galway so as to ensure that the conduct of the Sub-Project complies with the Grant and University of Galway's obligations thereunder by complying with the terms of the Grant as described in **Error! Reference source not found.** The Sub-Awardee further agrees to make any reasonable necessary amendments to this Agreement if the terms of the Grant are altered.

3. Project costs and contributions

- 3.1 *Invoices.* The Sub-Awardee shall invoice University of Galway for the Funding in accordance with the invoice schedule as set out in Schedule 3 hereto. Subject to compliance by the Sub-Awardee of its obligations under this Agreement, University of Galway shall pay all valid invoices in accordance with the payment schedule as set out in Schedule 3. The Sub-Awardee shall repay the University of Galway within thirty (30) days any part of the Funding which remains unspent at the end of the Term or earlier termination thereof.

4. Intellectual Property

- 4.1 The Sub-Awardee shall keep University of Galway informed on a regular basis of the results achieved pursuant to the performance of the Sub-Project. The Sub-Awardee shall prepare reports describing the work done, progress made and results achieved in the course of the Sub-Project and provide any other information requested at such reasonable intervals and in such manner as may be directed by University of Galway from time to time.
- 4.2 The Parties hereby acknowledge that neither Party shall introduce any background intellectual property to the Project.
- 4.3 Any Foreground shall be owned by the Sub-Awardee. Foreground shall be managed in accordance with Ireland's National IP Protocol 2019 "Policies and resources to help industry make good use of public research in Ireland" and any assignment of or licence thereto shall be subject to compliance with EU state aid rules.
- 4.4 The Sub-Awardee grants University of Galway a royalty-free, non-exclusive research licence to the Foreground for internal research and teaching purposes only.
- 4.5 Except for the express licence granted herein, no other licences are granted by implication, estoppel or otherwise.

5. Publications

The Sub-Awardee shall have sole responsibility with respect of publication. Any and all publications shall include the following reference: "This publication has emanated from research supported in part by a research grant from the HRB Primary Care Clinical Trials Network Ireland under Grant Reference CTN-2021-002. The opinions, findings and conclusions or recommendations expressed in this material are those of the author(s) and the Funder are not liable for any use that may be made of information contained herein".

Announcements: The Parties shall co-operate on any announcement or public statement concerning the existence, subject matter or any term of this agreement, or its performance.

6. Confidentiality

It is not anticipated that either Party will need to disclose confidential information to the other. In the event that the Parties need to disclose confidential information to each other at a later stage, the parties will enter a confidentiality Agreement with respect thereto. Notwithstanding, in the event that a Party receives information that a person with the knowledge, experience and skill as the Party ought reasonably know to be confidential, such Party shall exercise the same standard of care as it would itself exercise in relation to its own confidential information (but in no event less than a reasonable standard of care) to protect and preserve the proprietary and confidential nature of the information disclosed.

7. Termination

University of Galway shall be entitled forthwith to terminate this Agreement by written notice to the Sub-Awardee if: (a) the Sub-Awardee commits any breach of any of the provisions of the Grant, or this Agreement, and, in the case of a breach capable of remedy, fails to substantially remedy the same within thirty (30) days after receipt of a written notice giving full particulars of the breach and requiring it to be remedied; or (b) the Sub-Awardee breaches any applicable law or regulation. University of Galway's right of termination under this Agreement, and the exercise of any such right, shall be without prejudice to any other right or remedy (including any right to claim damages) that University of Galway may have in the event of a breach of contract, or breach of the Grant, or other default by the Sub-Awardee. The Sub-Awardee's irrevocably committed costs shall be covered up to the date of termination.

Unless otherwise agreed, this letter Agreement shall terminate if the Grant is cancelled, terminated, or revoked. This Agreement may also be terminated by University of Galway in the event that the Grant is amended, modified or reduced by the Funder.

8. Liability

The Sub-Awardee shall be wholly responsible for the conduct of the Sub-Project and University of Galway shall have no obligation, responsibility or any liability of any kind to the Sub-Awardee or any third party arising directly or indirectly from the Sub-Award or the payment of the Funding or any part thereof or any representation or other act or omission connected with the Sub-Award save and except the payment of the Funding in accordance with the terms and conditions of this Agreement unless it was caused by University of Galway's negligence.

In no circumstances shall either Party be liable for any loss, damage, costs or expenses of any nature howsoever incurred or suffered by the other Party that is (a) of an indirect, special or consequential nature; or (b) any loss of profits, revenue, business opportunity or goodwill.

Nothing in this Agreement excludes any Party's liability to the extent that it may not be so excluded under applicable law, including any such liability for death or personal injury caused by that person's negligence.

9. General

9.1 *No partnership:* Nothing in this Agreement shall be deemed to constitute a partnership between University of Galway and the Sub-Awardee nor shall either Party be taken to have any authority to bind or commit the other or be taken to have the authority to act as the agent of the other or in any other capacity other than as expressly authorised in this Agreement.

9.2 *No warranties:* Each Party acknowledges that, in entering into this Agreement, it does not do so in reliance on any representation, warranty or other provision except as expressly provided in this Agreement, and any conditions, warranties or other terms implied by statute or common law are excluded from this Agreement to the fullest extent permitted by law.

- 9.3 *Applicable Laws:* The Parties shall, in exercising their rights under this Agreement, comply with all applicable laws and regulations, and shall, at all times, be solely liable and responsible for such due observance and performance.
- 9.4 *Counterparts and signatures:* This Agreement may be executed in any number of counterparts, each of which when executed shall be deemed to be an original, and all of which together shall constitute one single agreement. The signature of a Party by means of a scan or digitization of the original signature (e.g. a scan in PDF format) or an electronic signature (e.g. via DocuSign), counts as an original signature with the same validity, enforceability and permissibility.
- 9.5 *Law and jurisdiction:* This Agreement and any non-contractual obligations arising out of or in connection with this Agreement shall be governed by and construed in accordance with the laws of Ireland and each Party agrees to submit to the exclusive jurisdiction of the courts of Ireland.

SCHEDULE 1
 The Grant

SCHEDULE 2
 Project Plan

Project Title	
Aim(s) and Objective(s)	
Research Plan	
Commencement Date	
Completion Date	
Gantt Chart	
Staff	The Researcher will take responsibility for ensuring appropriate staffing is in place for this project, and that the HRB guidelines on project management are adhered to.
Facilities	
Reporting requirements	An interim progress report of not more than 500 words must be submitted to University of Galway by the half-way point of the project. A final report of not more than 1,000 words must be submitted to University of Galway by the end of Month 12. Submissions should be made to University of Galway via primarycaretrials@universityofgalway.ie or as otherwise directed by University of Galway. University of Galway will provide a template for each report.
Governance	The sub-project must be conducted in line with all applicable research policies and practices specified by the Health Research Board: https://www.hrb.ie/funding/research-policies-and-practices/
Changes	Changes to the proposed research plan should be submitted to University of Galway for approval. Submissions should be made to Galway via primarycaretrials@universityofgalway.ie or as otherwise directed by University of Galway.

SCHEDULE 3
 The Payment Schedule

The Sub-Awardee shall invoice University of Galway for the amounts specified on the dates set out below. University of Galway shall pay Sub-Awardee the following amounts on the dates set out below:

Invoice Amount	Invoice Date	Payment Date
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	Upon execution of the agreement	Thirty (30) days from the date of receipt of the invoice
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EXECUTION PAGE

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, this Agreement has been duly executed by the undersigned signatories on the date of the last party to sign.

SIGNED for and on behalf of **NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF IRELAND, GALWAY**

Signature: _____
 Printed Name: Aengus Parsons
 Email: aengus.parsons@universityofgalway.ie
 Position: Director of Research
 Date: _____

SIGNED for and on behalf of **UNIVERSITY COLLEGE DUBLIN, NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF IRELAND, DUBLIN**

Signature: _____
 Printed Name: _____
 Email: _____
 Position: _____
 Date: _____

By signing in the space below, the Researcher indicates that he has read and understands the requirements, obligations and restrictions of the Sub-Project and the terms of this Agreement, such signature however is not intended to, and shall not make the Researcher a separate party to this Agreement.
