nature awards
inclusive health
research

Guidelines for applicants | 2022

This document presents the format for entries to the Inclusive Health Research awards and gives some advice on how to approach your own entry. The heart of the entry is a case study, supplemented by some administrative questions and supporting evidence.

We expect that, broadly speaking, entries will fall into one of two formats: work that addresses unmet health needs and work that aims to build a fairer and more inclusive research ecosystem.

We have outlined two slightly different case study formats:

1. **Unmet health needs** — focused on specific patient populations or affected communities and associated unmet health needs.
2. **More inclusive research ecosystem** — focused on initiatives relating to changes in policies or working practices that support a more equitable and inclusive health research ecosystem.

The following will be common across both formats:

- A narrative case study written in sections, each with a free text box.

- A suggested structure and example questions for suggested content in each section.

- Topic areas for each section, reflecting the assessment criteria.

- Additional sections to request information that will not be published, including supporting statements from partner organizations such as patient groups.

Unmet health needs — further detail

The unmet health needs format covers the full spectrum of the research process. We appreciate that this means work at very different stages of the process could be compared with one another. For this reason, we recognize three categories and will place the evaluation emphasis in different areas for each.

The table below features examples of eligible activities in each of the three categories. Applicants should identify the category that correlates with where they are in the research process. This enables projects that are at different stages to enter and compete against those at similar levels of development. Also, this enables applications in categories 2 and 3 to detail what they did at early stages and tell the full story of what they have done.

Categories

1: Understanding needs and context	2: Designing and conducting research	3: Translating research to impact
Engagement to identify health needs of patient populations/ affected communities and key contextual information to inform research questions and potentially design interventions. How patient views and priorities are considered in selecting research priorities. How health equity issues might inform which unmet health needs to investigate. How research funder priorities are established, budgets allocated and relevant projects selected.	How health research is designed to address clearly identified unmet patient and community needs, and the relevant healthcare environment, in order to maximize the chance of success of solutions. Appropriate involvement of patients, representatives, and experts in the design and delivery of research to build buy-in, key relationships and trusted partnerships. Appropriate involvement of a range of experts to transfer skills and knowledge in both directions.	Proactive engagement in order to develop the findings after the key research has been conducted. Building relationships with key stakeholders in order to access resources, expertize and the support required to translate the research towards positive health impact and to hand over leadership of the project when required. Appropriate involvement of patients etc in translation of results. Acknowledging the role that other parties played in the course of communicating findings.

Case study guidance

We would like you to tell the story of how you and your colleagues have supported a more inclusive health research ecosystem through your own actions or creating an environment to encourage others to do so. We want you to illustrate to others how they can follow in your footsteps in order to build a more inclusive health research culture in order to improve health outcomes globally.

Guidance is provided below to help you with the structure and content of the case study. Two case study structures are provided for the two formats.

1. **Unmet health needs** — focused on specific patient populations or affected communities and associated unmet health needs.

2. **More inclusive research ecosystem** — focused on initiatives relating to changes in policies or working practices that support a more equitable and inclusive health research ecosystem.

We have provided a list of questions to act as a guide as to the type of content that we are seeking. We do not expect everyone to be able to address all of the questions as not all will be relevant.

You are welcome to use quotes from representatives of the patient group/affected community, key stakeholders and partners.

Please include key dates in order for the judges to understand the timeline. Either month and year or just year is sufficient.

We suggest that you structure the case study to cover the topics below and ideally in this order. We have indicated which topics should be particularly addressed.

The application form

The form consists of the following fields.

Word limits are provided for some sections. If you can clearly answer the question in fewer words you are free to do so. Please ensure that you read the questions again once you have answered, to ensure that you have addressed all that are relevant.

1. **THE ENTRY**

   1.1. **Lead organization responsible for this submission**

   Address, including country

   Organization type

         Academic/research institution

         Teaching hospital/clinic

         Clinical (non-teaching)

         Patient Advocacy Organisation

         Research Funder

         Other Charity

         Publisher

         Other

   Website

   1.2. **Chief contact person**

Given name & Family name

Job title

Email

Telephone

1.3. Name of the project or programme

1.4. Timeframe

Date project started

1.5. Locations where research activity was conducted

1.6. Partners details (up to three partners can be listed)

Organization

Organization type

Organization website

Partner contact name

Partner contact job title

Email

1.7. Partner statements

Up to three partner organizations should be provided. Each of these will automatically be asked to supply a short supporting statement confirming their involvement in this project.

1.8. Plain-language case study title (15 words)

Short, accessible title that gives an indication of the nature of the application and is understandable by a lay audience. Please avoid overly technical language.

1.9. Plain-language case study summary (150 words)

Overview of the case study written for a lay audience.

1.10. Introduction to the applicant, partners and their role in project (200 words)

Please provide a brief overview of your role in the project and that of your partners. (Please include details about the role of you/your organization and your partners as required in the case study, so that it contains all relevant information to act as a standalone piece of writing.)

1.11. Key words (20 words)

Please list key words relevant to the case study such as patient group, disease area, type of intervention, key countries, geographies, etc.

2. CASE STUDY STRUCTURE — UNMET HEALTH NEEDS

Group 1: Understanding needs and context

Group 2: Designing and conducting research

Group 3: Translating research into impact

We are seeking case studies that can be published, so please write your entry as a summary, rather than a series of statements addressing the questions. You do not need to repeat information across sections. We do not expect everyone to be able to address all of the questions, as not all will be relevant.

2.1. The beneficiaries (all applicants) (400 words)

2.1.1.   Please define the specific patient group or affected community that this application relates to. If available, please provide information that quantifies their number and geographic distribution, the health burden and associated economic and social deprivation, i.e., 125 million people are at risk of onchocerciasis in 37 countries where the disease is endemic, 30 of which are in sub-Saharan Africa, six are in the Americas and one is in the Arabian Peninsula. If your application relates to a very broad patient population or affected community, then please still describe the potential beneficiaries including any relevant details such as geography, gender, socioeconomic status, etc.

2.1.2.   What unmet health need does this group have which has, or is likely to, form the focus of research, potentially leading to better healthcare interventions. How important is this unmet need in the context of the other health needs of this group?

2.1.3.   How could this research relating to the identified unmet need lead to greater health equity? Has this community been historically underserved with regards to the development and deployment of health interventions and what barriers remain that restrict the development and sustainable adoption of more effective solutions? If not already stated, please indicate whether any research outcomes or associated health interventions are likely to benefit people in countries that have limited healthcare resources, i.e., LMICs, or whether benefits will mainly accrue to the populations in wealthy nations?

2.1.4.   Why did you select this patient group or affected community? Have you changed your focus or persuaded others to target research activity towards a greater unmet health need or to try to address health inequality?

2.2.   The engagement (all applicants) (400 words)

2.2.1.   Please provide a brief overview of the engagement activities conducted. This could be in relation to developing a more detailed understanding of unmet health needs, the deficiency of current interventions, if any, and relationship building. Groups engaged could include patients, carers, local clinicians, scientists, experts, and patient and community/civil society groups in affected communities.

2.2.2.   Has any of the team visited people in the affected community or vice versa and what activities occurred during such visits?

2.2.3.   Were any activities conducted to develop community consent or ownership of the research and the potential outcomes? What has been achieved thus far?

2.2.4.   Has the engagement activity led to any new insights about the unmet health needs or the local healthcare context, which have informed aspects of the research strategy, key research questions to address or to the design of new healthcare interventions? Have you changed your approach as a result of the engagement activity?

2.2.5.   You do not necessarily need to list all of the organizations or individuals that you engaged with. Also, you can simply write the job title and organization of someone rather than include their given names. Public engagement activities are not eligible.

2.3.   The research (especially category 2 and 3 applicants) (400 words)

Please include brief details of the research plans that you have designed, or perhaps conducted, in order to develop a better understanding of the unmet needs leading to potential solutions. When explaining any underpinning science/research activity, please write for a lay audience. We do not need a lengthy and detailed description of the technical aspects of the research.

2.3.1.   How have any insights or information obtained from engagement shaped the design and delivery of the research?

2.3.2.   Are there specific assumptions, dogmas or prejudices that you are seeking to investigate/challenge?

2.3.3.   Are you seeking to address any key gaps in experimental data that represent a barrier to a community receiving appropriate health interventions? Why were they absent?

2.3.4.   Has or will research be conducted in the country where the affected community resides or equally within that community? Have any members of the patient population or affected community been involved in the research in an active way? Have, or will, any local researchers, healthcare professionals or NGOs, etc. in the affected country or community participate in the research?

2.4.   Translating to impact (especially category 3 applicants) (400 words)

2.4.1.   What activities have been conducted so that the research findings or outcomes are utilized? Please do not include the submission of academic journal articles, attending academic conferences or public engagement.

2.4.2.   What activities have you conducted in order to build a clear understanding of the pathway to impact and key organizations involved, i.e., development path from research findings to implementation of interventions?

2.4.3.   Beyond academic research collaborators, have you developed any partnerships/relationships with key organizations in order to support the development and adoption of health interventions? Please provide a brief overview of the key partners you have interacted with and their role. This could include corporates, NGOs, policy makers and health services. (Engagement activity solely focused on securing grant or capital funding is not eligible.)

2.4.4.   Have you involved or worked with affected communities to support the utilization of research findings or the development and deployment of solutions?

2.4.5.   What aspects of your approach could be adopted by others and have you advocated your approach to them?

2.5.   The future (all applicants) (100 words)

2.5.1.   Please provide a brief summary of what current plans you and the team have to develop this project? What is your ultimate goal?

3.   CASE STUDY STRUCTURE — MORE EQUITABLE RESEARCH ECOSYSTEM

The case study structure below is provided for those applications which relate to the introduction of a new or modified policy, working practice or process that supports a more inclusive research ecosystem. The ultimate beneficiaries should still be those with current or future unmet health needs.

We are seeking case studies that can be published as a piece of writing, so please write your entry as a summary, rather than a series of statements addressing the questions. You do not need to repeat information across sections. We do not expect everyone to be able to address all of the questions, as not all will be relevant.

3.1. The context (400 words)

3.1.1. Please set the scene and provide some context to what you have done.

3.1.2. Briefly describe your organization in the context of this case study and role of any partners

3.1.3. What was the status quo? Were you seeking to solve an identified problem or deficiency?

3.2. The initiative (400 words)

3.2.1. What have you changed or created? What did you do differently?

3.2.2. Is this change intended to ultimately benefit a specific patient group or affected community?

3.2.3. What triggered this to happen?

3.2.4. Did you come across any challenges in implementing this change?

3.2.5. Was your organization the first to implement this or did you adopt or adapt best practice from elsewhere?

3.3. The engagement (400 words)

3.3.1. Did you engage with others to inform your approach and who did this include, i.e., patient populations/affected communities or expert representatives such as advocacy groups, healthcare professionals, NGOs, etc.

3.4. The impact (400 words)

3.4.1. What has been the impact of this change so far and what is anticipated in future?

3.4.2. How will patients or affected communities ultimately benefit from this change?

3.4.3. Do you have any metrics to evidence the impact or are you collecting them?

3.4.4. Have you made efforts to advocate your approach to others?

3.4.5.   Could what you have done be implemented more widely within your own institution or across others and what impact could this have?

3.5.   The future (100 words)

3.5.1.   Please provide a brief summary of what current plans you and the team have to develop this initiative? What is your ultimate goal?

QUESTIONS FOR ALL APPLICATIONS

4.   The prize fund (100 words)

Please provide a brief summary of how you and partners would use the 20,000 Euro winner's prize. The funds must be used in line with the spirit and goals of this award to develop a more inclusive health research ecosystem. As such it can be used to support the development of the project towards positive impact.You do not need to get a costing or approval from your finance colleagues.

5.   Advice (100 words)

Based on your experiences, what advice would you give to others in order to encourage them to contribute to a more inclusive research ecosystem?

6.   Supporting evidence

Please provide up to five of the following to evidence the activities described above. You do not need to include five if you feel that less is sufficient. For category one entries, we understand that you may not be able to submit any.

6.1.   Funding

Please provide details of up to two awarded grants/sources of funding that supported the activities.

Funder

Grant title

Award period

Value in GBP equivalent

Weblink (if available)

6.2.   Academic publications

Please provide up to two academic publications specific to this application.

Journal title

Date of publication

Article title

Names of any authors who are listed partners on this application

Weblink (if available)

6.3.   Other publications

Please provide up to two articles published online.

Date of publication

Publisher

Title of article

Weblink

6.4.   Other communications, including media and conferences

Date of publication

Publisher/organiser

Title of article/talk

Weblink

6.5.   Other evidence